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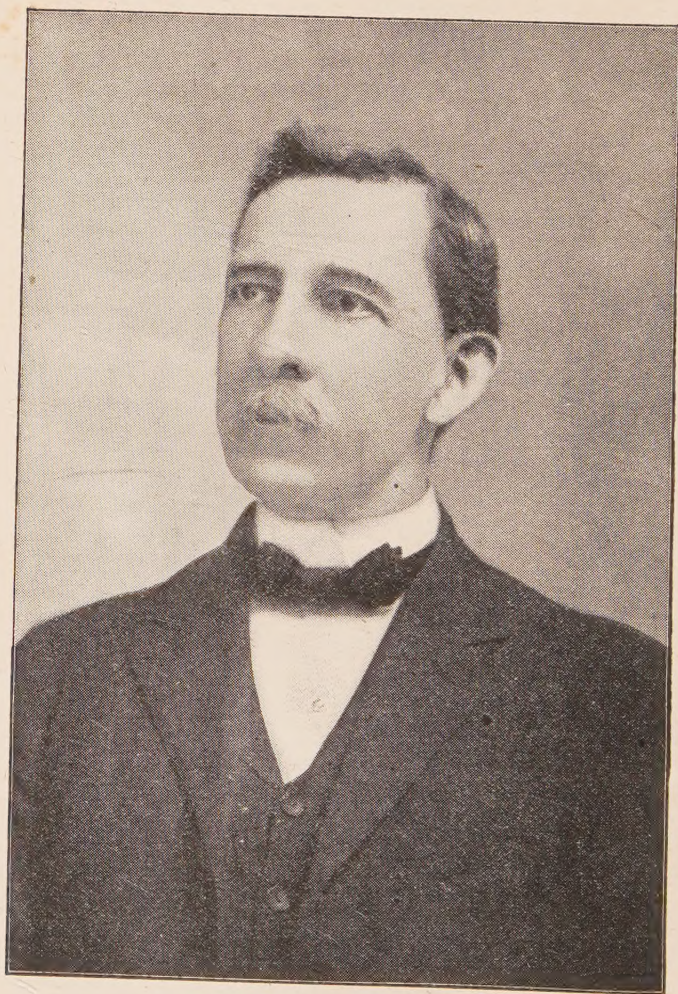
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REVEREND C. A. JENKENS.

GOOD GUMPTION

OR

THE STORY OF A WISE FOOL

Being the Somewhat Humorous Chronicle, Set Down by Himself, of
the Life and Doings of the Reverend Heredity Beans, Doctor of
Divinity, Who Started Life as a Patent Office Production,
Was Looked upon by His Enemies and Others as a
Lunatic, but Who "Got There" When They
Didn't, Who Became Respected and Feared
as Well as Loved and Honored, and Who
Did His Duty to God and Man.

By C. A. JENKENS

*Author of Some Unpublished Jokes, Numerous Mistakes, and a
Heap of Excellent but Rejected Poetry on "Spring."*

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To those who have
GOOD GUMPTION

*that they may keep it
and to those who haven't
that they may get it
this book is cordially*
DEDICATED

*From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot,
he is all mirth. . . . He hath a heart as sound as a
bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for what his
heart thinks, his tongue speaks.*

SHAKESPEARE: *Much Ado About Nothing*; act iii., scene 3.

I cannot hope to entertain you with a merely humorous or facetious story. Harlequin without his mask is known to present a very sober countenance, and was himself, the story goes, the melancholy patient whom the doctor advised to go and see Harlequin—a man full of cares and perplexities like the rest of us, whose self must always be serious to him, under whatever mask or disguise or uniform he presents himself to the public. . . . The humorous writer professes to awaken and direct your love, your pity, your kindness; your scorn for untruth, pretension, imposture; your tenderness for the weak, the poor, the oppressed, the unhappy. To the best of his means and ability he comments on all the ordinary actions and passions of life almost. He takes upon himself to be the week-day preacher, so to speak. Accordingly, as he finds, and speaks, and feels the truth best, we regard him, esteem—sometimes love him.

THACKERAY: *The English Humorists*.

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Foreword

GOOD GUMPTION was designed by its author, the Reverend C. A. Jenkins, of Statesville, N. C., to serve two strong purposes. First and foremost, it is a protest against sham, hypocrisy, cant, and humbuggery, without mercy for either the age, sex, or rank of the persons in whom these evils are manifested. Secondly, it is a plea for the man from the country—the individual usually pictured and described as a boorish, brainless, unlettered “easy mark,” but who, nevertheless, is the backbone of his nation, whether American, British, German, French, or Russian. Outwardly the book is a work of humor; inwardly it is as serious a story as ever was written.

Long ago Mr. Jenkins determined to write something that would strip the mask from those men and women who impose themselves upon the world as good citizens and Christians, but who, at heart, are emissaries of the Evil One. Consideration of the scheme of the work, however, revealed the necessity of broadening it to embrace other forms of humbuggery than the mere religious fraud. Mr. Jenkins found great difficulty in deciding what medium to employ for the expression of his thoughts. He knew only too well that he might be gifted with the pen of a prophet and yet fail to convince his readers, that he might shout his message from the housetops and yet fail to reach the ears of the hurrying multitude

below, and that he might address his public in all seriousness and yet fail to have it learn the lesson he sought to teach. And he knew, too, that people like to be amused, and that the greatest of statesmen, orators, and teachers never have scorned to press home great truths by means of a funny story. So grew the idea of Heredity Beans, a country parson, who seemed to be a fool, but wasn't, who had to figure out for himself the right way to live and then to live it, and who crusaded against evils with the devoted purpose of a knight of chivalry and the mental alertness of a Governor Folk.

In describing the rise of his hero from backwoods lad to metropolitan pastor, Mr. Jenkins grasped the opportunity thus afforded to show how the straightforward, honest, unsophisticated countryman, after all, is the true type of national manhood. And so Mr. Jenkins's book took shape as a work of humor—something funny—a satire upon men, women, and things that are humbugs masquerading in the guise of good—a jest, if you will, but a jest in earnest; a joke, but a joke with a great, grim, practical truth behind it.

Introduction

WHILE mankind exists no age will be without its evils in persons and things. Sometimes the person is the cause of the evil in the thing; sometimes the thing breeds evil in the person. Some men do wrong because they like it, others because they are forced to do it; but more than either of these classes do wrong and try to hide it because they want their fellows to think they are doing right.

In this class are to be found the shams, hypocrites, humbugs, frauds, grafters, and the political, financial, and social parasites that so plentifully blot modern civilization. It is this class, too, that is hardest to detect and most difficult to suppress. Science is nullifying rapidly many of the great evils that formerly flourished, popular government is eradicating others, and wise legislation and administration still others; but the sham, the humbug, the hypocrite, and the fraud continue to eke out their existence and dodge the hands that attempt to root them out. Double-faced, nimble-footed, and cunning-minded, they are always with us, preying upon us with specious schemes, with the evil-hiding cloak of religion, and with the glitter they would have us believe great.

How best can they be fought? Assuredly not by learned, ponderous essays, "too deep" for the masses of the people that are the cause of the evil against which they are fought.

ly not by eloquent preaching and oration, too rare and too easily misunderstood, alas! in this practical age of ours. Assuredly not by experience, if we are to believe P. T. Barnum's aphorism that people like to be humbugged. And to the hypocrite and the humbug government and legislation alike are impotent.

Why not fight them with humor, with the shafts of satire, with the clubs of ridicule and caricature? Many an evil man who failed to yield to the thunder of spoken or written denunciation or dodged the pursuit of legislation has been forced to hide his head from the derision of the wit, cartoonist, and fun-maker. Why? Because it is not in the nature of mankind to resist such things. It hurts a man more to laugh at him than to fight him. Too often he can fight back and fight better, or at least with more cunning than his antagonist. But for the evil man or the evil thing to laugh back is well-nigh impossible. The amusing, the comic, the laughable often is more potent than the serious, the learned, the argumentative. Commodore Vanderbilt, who knew human nature pretty thoroughly, once sought to entertain a party of guests by offering them a highly scientific lecture by a noted specialist in astronomy. The learned lecturer received a neat check for his discourse, but the entertainment was not a success. The next night a specialist in measuring the value of men was engaged. Measuring the man's value by the value of his work, Vanderbilt gave him a check for four times the sum paid to the man of science, saying that the money had been better

book, which is designed to fight

the sham, the hypocrite, and the humbug, has seen fit to do battle with the weapons of the humorist. His Heredity Beans, country lad, preacher, crusader, and reformer, is a strong type. He strikes at the heart of things. He spares none of the falsities of life. The sham revivalist, the sham lawyer, the sham editor, the sham pastor, the sham man and the sham woman, sham justice and sham religion receive their thrashing at his hands. In creating him the author makes us laugh, but with his keen satire he realizes Dryden's truism, "The end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction," as well as the truth of Frederick the Great's view of it, "The connection between vice and meanness is a fit subject for satire, but when the satire is a fact it cuts with the irresistible power of a diamond."

And this is the weapon the author of GOOD GUMPTION wields—a strong, sharp, clean-cutting sword which cleaves its way into the mass of sham and error he has found in the world and among men, laying bare their hypocrisies, discovering their shame, and permitting his readers to see the evil hearts that beat under the otherwise fair surfaces.

Follow Heredity Beans from the hour of his birth and you will find him constantly turning up the falsities and absurdities with which men and women hoodwink their fellow-men and women, and exposing their follies, frailties, and foibles. Even his father, with his absurd *caveat*, he does not spare. The shallow, money-making evangelist comes in for a share of his ridicule. The youth Toothpick, proud of his birth and fortune and yet a loser in the game of love, has his

counterpart in many, many instances of real life. And how often do we hear from our courts of justice just such stories as Heredity tells in the case of Turnipins, and again how often do we see in real life just such falsities as Beans shows us he found on his visit to Philadelphia.

And still again how often do we see just such effeminate, silly, and heresy-teaching preachers as the individual the Reverend Mr. Beans told to go and take himself out of the world. Notice also the advertisement of patent medicine which Beans concocted, and observe how like it is to the advertisements of the cure-all remedies one sees in the papers or displayed upon bill boards. Notice again his chapter on the average girl. It is no insult to the good womanhood of our land to write such things, for alas, it only too true that many girls nowadays are nothing like the capable, intelligent, and frugal housewives that their mothers and grandmothers were. In this respect, at least, modern education and modern society have done little to commend themselves to mankind. Certainly Heredity Beans' experience with the average girl was a real one. And to crown it all, how like humanity is it that Beans, at the prime of his career, should sit down to dictate a biography of himself that should be published after his death. It is true indeed that "all is vanity."

To all who love truth as well as to all who love fun, GOOD GUMPTION should prove a mine of amusement as well as a field for fruitful and profitable thought.

MONTGOMERY F. ESSIG.

Nashville, Tenn., 1 February, 1907.

KEEPING UP THE STOCK

Chapter I.

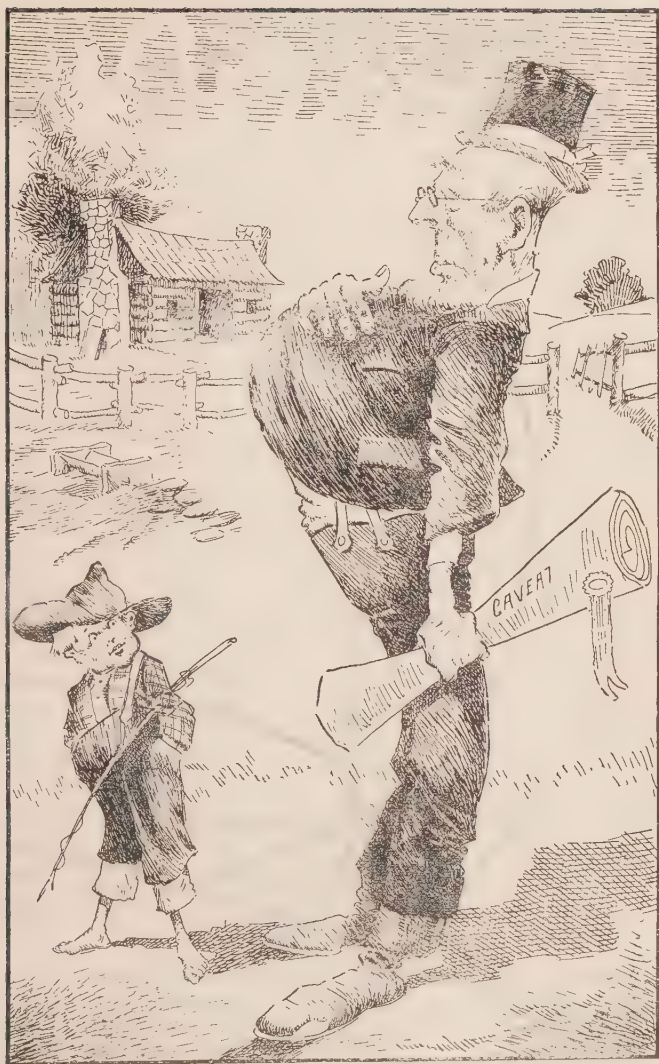
CUCUMBER BEANS was my father—that's the reason I am his son.

He was an ardent believer in heredity, and held that good blood is the basis of all nobility and genius, and that to improve the blood of the human race is the gospel of nature and the goal of philosophy. Bad stock, he argued, is the sole cause of pauperism, riot, crime, and war. "A man is the sum of his antecedents," he declared. "Improve the stock, and you hasten the Millennium."

Thus heredity, antecedents, environment, stock, and blood were large and meaningful words in my father's vocabulary; but this is no marvel, since he claimed an ancestry threading its way back through the centuries to Alfred the Great, whose distinction was due to his good blood. Starting with this royal founder, he recognized as branches of the family tree Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. Samuel Johnson, and Wordsworth the poet, in England; and in America, Washington, William Cullen Bryant, and himself. He was known frequently to observe that the family had improved with each generation, and, in all likelihood, would be perfected in his offspring. Since I am that offspring, modesty forbids further comment.

My father, in his later life, loved Darwin with no common love, and studied, with the enthusiasm of a specialist, the great naturalist's theories regarding the evolution of living things, including man, from the lower forms of life. But long before Darwin gave his theories to the world my father had thought out and perfected his own. Therefore, try as he might and respect the great scientist as he did, he always declared Darwin's ideas were simply a development—logical enough in view of the advance of science—of the great Beans hypothesis. And so he learned by heart the celebrated story of the tame pigeons transported to an uninhabited island where their descendants, freed from the care and constant attention of civilization, lost the beautiful ornamentations of color and marking which had characterized their civilized ancestors, and doffing their bright spots, rings, and stripes, put on the dark blue of the old original type. There is just as real a "reversion to type" in the case of mankind as in that of pigeons, he contended; and on this broad principle he explained the treachery of Judas, the inhumanity of Nero, the infidelity of Thomas Paine, and, in later years, the lunacy of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. All downward tendencies being regarded as demonstrations of this law, his favorite maxim was "The stock must be kept up, for there's virtue in good blood."

In view of this pronounced tendency on my father's part, it will not excite surprise when I say that he spent two winters at a sanitarium seeking to regain the health he had lost in an attempt to solve the problem as to the best method of producing perfect human stock. At length his theory reached such a stage of



"THE STOCK MUST BE KEPT UP, FOR THERE'S VIRTUE IN GOOD BLOOD."

development that he formally applied through an attorney for a patent, but succeeded only in getting a *caveat*. The application filed in the Patent Office at Washington—which out-Darwined Darwin and antedated him as well—set forth the following:

Genius seems to grow in forks, without symmetry, balance, or unity. This is due to the faulty processes of heredity, and can be prevented only by due observance of the laws of natural fitness. It is a defect in selection when genius is imperfect. It is a solecism for a great man to be noted for any one thing; for he should be noted for everything alike. The great men of the ages are potent illustrations of defective hereditation [you'll notice he coined a word to fit his theory], none of them being noted for a variety of excellencies and powers, but all monotonously remarkable for only one thing. For example, when Napoleon Bonaparte is mentioned, we do not think of poetry, music, literature, or statesmanship, but only of blood and war. He is a warrior, and nothing more—strong in only one point. On the other hand, when Jefferson is mentioned, we do not think of battles, but of statecraft and government. He is of interest to us in one function only.

So we associate only one idea generally with every great man. Aristotle stands for logic; Plato for philosophy; Shakespeare for poetry; Washington for patriotism; Cicero for eloquence; Rothschild for money; Moses for law; St. Paul for religion; Jenny Lind for song; Beethoven for music; Humboldt for learning; and Cucumber Beans for discoveries in heredity.

These are all one-sided and deformed characters. Genius should be remarkable for everything—that is, it should be universal. For instance, the ideal man should have the logical trend of Aristotle, the philosophical astuteness of Plato, the poetic gift of Homer, the artistic sense of Raphael, Michael Angelo, or Landseer, the statesmanship of William Pitt, the heroism of Leonidas, the martial spirit of Alexander, the eloquence of Demosthenes, the mathematical genius of Euclid,

the inventive talent of Fulton, the musical sense of Handel, the linguistic power of Mezzofanti, the physical strength of a Samson, and the beauty of an Apollo. This composite character, which is at once the world's greatest need and greatest problem, can be produced when the beneficent laws of evolution have been heeded by mankind.

The undersigned prays for letters patent on "A Discovery of the Natural Method for the Production of Universal Genius." The processes on which protection is craved are set forth as follows: Since the quality of the stock determines the existence and scope of genius, the adaptability of parties contracting marriage to each other is of prime importance. Each should be the most perfect specimen of the physical, mental, and moral *homo*, each suited to the other by the best possible natural and spiritual combinations. Hence lunatics, idiots, and fools should not marry. This necessary arrangement would reduce the quantity but increase the quality, thereby hastening the race to its perfect goal.

Moreover, it is an indispensable condition that no member of a family in which there has been a defaulter, criminal, drunkard, sneak, or knave shall enter the marital state. No person coming from stock inclined to infidelity, atheism, suicide, or divorce should enter into matrimony, since such stock can produce only a degenerate species. Further, a low brow, a decayed tooth, a cross eye, freckles, moles, or warts should prove barriers to wedlock. The law of heredity prevents also from entering into the marriage state all ugly people, women with shrill voices or mustaches, men who talk through the nose, or have bowlegs, and all specimens of stock subject to gossip or other disease. Before marriage, the family records should be inspected by an officer duly appointed by the law, to see that these precautions are complied with.

Ages should be adjusted; for the union of a girl of sixteen and a man of fifty is a crime against nature. There should be, furthermore, harmony of form, hair, eyes, size, tastes, and intellectual and moral affinities.

In the production of universal genius, the laws of environ-

ment as well as those of heredity, must be considered. Hence an infant should not be allowed to taste bad food, to smell bad odors, hear discordant sounds, feel rough surfaces, or see unsightly objects. All the senses, from their earliest use, should be cultivated assiduously to produce the perfect man.

Parents, therefore, should see to it that their offspring have not their senses shocked by bad pictures, harsh tones, grating voices, ungraceful movements, untidy rooms, the popping of firecrackers or other explosives, or the barking of dogs. Nor should the babe be startled by the scream of a cat, the hoot of an owl, the crow of a cock, or the yell of a boy. The mother should speak only in soft notes, never harshly or angrily, and sing only the sweetest melodies; and the father should not sing at all until the sense of sound has been fairly developed in the child. The baby carriage should be wheeled only along the most beautiful streets and through the parks, never entering the alleys and back streets, lest the child should behold some object likely to deform its sense of beauty. It never must be permitted for a moment to become the victim of mosquitoes, flies, or gnats, lest bad impressions be made that will give rise to wrong views of life.

The Patent Office man recognized the originality and profundity of the document from which the above is extracted, but modestly suggested that he feared the conditions could be met only in the latter part of the Millennium. Father, however, insisted that there could be no Millennium until the postulates advocated should be accepted as the basis of civilization. Be that as it may, the experiment was tried on me, and worked well.

My name is Heredity Beans; for short, they called me "Red" Beans. At my birth, the rooster was banished from the yard, the old eight-day clock was muffled, and the door-bell was removed in order that I

might not have my musical sense impaired. This was the negative arrangement; on the positive side, my father was playing an air on an old accordion, a veritable heirloom, in order that my powers of harmony might be quickened at the start. Garlic and onions were banished from the premises, lest evil should befall my olfactory organs. The best pictures were arranged on the walls of the room, and every other precaution taken to promote artistic vision, according to the provisions of the *caveat*.

I had all the diseases that a first-class baby ought to have, and particularly a full assortment of the thrash, which I caught from my father whenever my wakeful idiosyncrasies demanded a promenade in the night. My parent betrayed here his usual judgment, failing to observe that I possessed an active brain, and an inquiring turn of mind. He also forgot that I was born in my native land, and that, as a true patriot, I wished to know something of my country. Who would enter a strange land and be stupid enough to sleep forever while most novel and interesting events momentarily were taking place? Who would be so insensible as to close his eyes to the charming beauties and curious sights of a new country? Every moment disclosed novel objects of interest—every hour introduced wonders to my attention.

Of course, such phenomena made due impressions on my plastic faculties, and, in attempting to grapple with them, I simply followed the law of my nature. Forsooth, because I was natural, I must be swung in a cradle and have a funeral dirge sung over me, or be jerked into a mild spasm, and scolded, or be bounced

up and down on the floor, at the rate of forty miles an hour, as if I had done something. Was there any *caveat* for that, I wonder?

When all other remedies failed, I was overpowered, thrown back on a pillow, gagged, and made to swallow a small apothecary shop. This treatment seemed weird in the extreme. I wanted to inquire about the lamp—I had never seen a lamp before. I wanted to see myself in the looking-glass. I wanted to get acquainted with my parents. I desired to be social and extend my friendships; for my circle of acquaintances was very small. And for this commendable spirit I was abused. Yet I said nothing.

Does not that great document, the Constitution of the United States, declare that all men are born free and equal? Then, if a man can lie awake all night with impunity, why should a baby's liberties be curtailed because of insomnolence? I insist just here that the United States, having adopted the sentiment above mentioned, ought to arise from the lethargy of a century and defend the rights of so numerous and respectable a class of its citizens when they cry. But when I cried I only got paregoric. In spite of all this, I was my mother's favorite child—she had but one—and she must have thought a great deal of me, for she bought out a drug-store, when I was but two weeks old, to make me comfortable. At all events, that's my father's affidavit, and he ought to know—for it broke him.

My physical sufferings were slight compared with the pangs of intellect I endured in my infancy. I remember especially the mortification I underwent at the

strange antics of my parents. For instance, my father would seize me frantically, hold me up at arms' length over his head in the air, look straight up at me, and laugh; then he would spread out my heels, let my stomach come down on his head, and then rub my face against his nose. These capers seemed so foolish that I often wept. And my mother, too, would do and say such odd things. She would address me as "feety itsy sing." There is no such language; how could she expect me to understand it? She would not accost a goat that way. I was greatly grieved. At other times she greeted me on waking as "oo precious lub-bie angie." It appeared to me to be inexpressibly silly that my parents should do such things, and I was ashamed of their conduct.

Having passed with considerable credit through my pupilage in gnawing rattles, butting my head against the floor, and mashing my fingers in the door, I was at length garbed in pants, and put in possession of a hobbyhorse. This part of my life was without incident further than that when I dreamed of Indians scalping me, and, in consequence, kicked off the bed covers with appropriate fuss, I was denounced as a disturber of sleep, and accused of eating too much supper. Then I was laid out in my crib again, with a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary on top of me to prevent a repetition of my offense. The love-sick maid may sing, "Oh! make me a child again just for a night," but Heredity Beans wouldn't be a child again for a couple of mints.

Still, allowance must be made for my early impressions, since I was very young when I was born.

PASSING OF THE CIRCUS

Chapter II.

UNDER the gracious laws of heredity I increased daily in innocence and wisdom. My father rejoiced as he observed my feats of jumping over chicken coops, climbing trees, and walking on the roofs of houses; and especially did he express himself in terms of unmeasured praise whenever I sprang into the air and struck my heels together three times before touching the ground. And it was the more gratifying to him because the average boy does well to crack his heels together twice while in the air. Indeed, this trick impressed my father so profoundly that he tried it himself; but seeing that, as a consequence, he suffered from a sprained ankle for three weeks, he gave it up—not the ankle, but the trick—maintaining that such wonderful control of the muscles on my part indicated that the stock had reached perfection.

The world seemed to me to get bigger and bigger every day. What an immense thing the earth is to a boy! When, however, it was announced in the “Toadville Times” that John Robinson’s Huge and Unrivalled Circus would exhibit at the village two weeks thence, I concluded that the globe could get no larger without serious injury to its internal arrangements. The stores and fences of Toadville were adorned with

flaming pictures of the world's great wonders in the form of gigantic mules, accomplished horses, dwarf ponies, trained dogs, educated pigs, a herd of elephants, giraffes, monkeys, birds of every plumage, water animals, the fat woman, a giant, a family of pygmies, splendid chariots drawn by richly caparisoned camels, and many other sights that seemed possible only in the realm of the imagination. Father said, with some vehemence, that he was sure he would never be caught at a show. My mother added, with unwonted emphasis, that respectable people were never seen at such places; certainly it was out of keeping with the Beanses. But father, seeming a little excited, took his beaver and said he believed he would walk down to town; he thought he needed a little exercise. This was somewhat remarkable, since he had not in five years ventured down the street at that hour of the afternoon; and Toadville was a full mile from our home, Shakerag.

When the sun had set, father still delayed his return. Tea was ready, but where was he? Father's absence from the evening meal (or indeed from any sort of a meal) having been unknown of late years, naturally created anxiety in our home, so mother, now wrought up to a sort of nervous frenzy, hastened me down the street to look him up.

"I know Mr. Beans has been robbed," said she, "or smitten by paralysis, or attacked by apoplexy. Surely something dreadful has happened!" And wringing her hands in despair, she started in one direction in search of father, while I darted off in another, weeping and expecting to find my parent a corpse.

But when I reached the town, I learned he had been seen two hours before, passing down Gully Avenue. I called at the Doctor's with fear and trembling, but he was not there. I inquired at the hotel, but he was not there. I never knew him to be so hard to find before, and becoming alarmed, moved the town to a diligent search for my lost parent. Every public place was visited, every nook and corner searched, the church bells were rung, the fire engines called out, the old rusty cannon, that, for half a century, had done the honors of the day on the Fourth of July, was shot off, and an old drum, kept in the courthouse as a relic of the Mexican War, was drubbed furiously. But music, even of this elevated character, failed of the end for which it was intended, and I was on the eve of returning with sad heart to Shakerag, when suddenly turning a corner, I came upon my father standing on a box reading the show bills. His attitude betokened deepest interest. His spectacles were accurately adjusted and his gaze was fairly glued to the pictures on the billboards.

"Oh, my father," shouted I, in a delirium of bliss, "I have found you at last!"

"Why, Heredity, is that you, my son? Yes—oh—ah—er—well—so—yes—I was just on my way home when—er—yes—so—fi—you say that's you, Heredity? Well, you see, Red, my eyes are dimmed by reason of years, and it requires time to decipher these grotesque hieroglyphics, which after all are but a snare for the blind. Red, avoid all appearance of evil, my boy, for I have scruples on this subject. Broad is the road that leads to destruction, my son."



"I CAME UPON MY FATHER, STANDING ON A BOX READING THE SHOW BILLS."

"Yes, sir," said I, with subdued reverence for parental authority. "Is that the gate you were looking at just now, father?"

"Oh! no, my son. That is only a common hoop covered with cheap paper, held in the unsavory hand of a painted clown, through which is about to leap a profane acrobat. And, my boy, carefully watch the wiles of the Dev—" But the last syllable was not uttered, for mother, with eyes bathed in tears, came rushing up.

"Cuke Beans," she exclaimed, in broken sobs, "what on earth are you doing here in the dark gazing at these vulgar posters? Are you sick, Cucumber Beans? Is your mind right? Have your morals exploded all of a sudden? And, pray, what has become of all your high theories about blood, and stock, and environment set forth in that Patent Office *caveat*, which, you say, is the profoundest document ever penned by man? Just answer me, Cuke Beans!"

My father's head drooped, and in solemn accents he replied: "The wise man has said, 'There is a time to keep silence.' That time is now." So we all returned in pensive mood to our home at Shakerag—and family prayer was omitted that night.

For several days my father seemed engrossed with some curious-looking papers, which I took to be documents of great importance, since they were scrupulously guarded from all observation but his own. Great government briefs relating to the *caveat* from Washington, D. C., thought I. But one morning as father was chasing a pig out of the yard, an unsympathetic clothesline removed his beaver, in which he kept

a small post office—and his *caveat*, unraveling the mystery by disclosing a sheaf of show handbills.

“Oh! bother! fi-diddle! what’s this trash doing on my premises, Red, my son?” inquired father. “How insidious is error, Heredity! Eschew evil and do good; be not led astray with the error of the wicked,” he moralized, with stern decision, as he descried me seated on the root of a scrub oak, feasting on the picture of a clown turning a somersault in the air. “Defile not your youth, my boy, and hasten to school, where loftier sentiments are imbibed, and where sublimer deeds are inspired.”

I departed on my sad mission to the schoolhouse, satisfied of the fact that the circus was preying upon my parent’s mind.

Saturday morning, at the peep of day, Robinson’s “colossal” caravan began to pass our front gate, with that indefinable eclat which always distinguishes such occasions. My father heard the sound thereof, and with the peculiar promptness that invariably characterizes a man who hates a show, at a single effort cleared the footboard of his bed, knocked out three slats, and lit on one foot. As he gazed from the window upon the magnificent pageant, he indulged in a couple of appropriate homilies, saying: “Red, my son, look not on evil. If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.”

But the boy Heredity happened to be interested himself in passing events, and they all seemed to be passing just then; so, located on the gatepost, protected from the morning dews by his mother’s tablecloth, he was perhaps not in a condition to give such heed as a

parent's advice should receive. Suddenly, the steam piano struck up a lively tune which sent a thrill over my father's musical tendencies, causing him to exclaim with unwonted animation: "That's not so bad, Heredity, my son; is it, my boy?" Whereupon, regaining his accustomed calm, he observed significantly, "But the daughters of music shall be brought low." Next came the animals in slow defile, breaking the monotony of the quiet hamlet of Toadville.

"See! my son," exclaimed my father, with evident excitement; "there is the unicorn of Job," pointing to a gorgeously decorated cage containing a rhinoceros. "Observe that insatiate tiger, fierce and cruel, the symbol of uncivilized man; mark that gorilla, so painfully like the human kind; Mr. Darwin thinks a relationship exists sure enough."

"And so do I, father, for he is as much like Grandfather Beans as two black-eyed peas. This must be a sort of family show, ain't it, pa?"

"But, my son, let us not be led astray by the vagaries even of great men; for appearances are deceptive, and only in his fall does man enter the sphere of the brute. Even then, redemption is found in hereditation and environment. But more of this anon. Note the majestic lion, just coming into view; the king of beasts, conspicuous type of him that goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Enter not, my son, into the path of the wicked, nor stray thou in the way of evil men. The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble."

And onward, still onward passed the motley throng of living things, so diverse in form, habit, and habitat,

that my father, while charmed with Darwin's views of environment and human hereditation, saw in this heterogeneous cavalcade a fatal objection to the great naturalist's then newly-postulated origin of species.

"The apostle declared the fixedness of species," said he, "when he wrote, as if he were beholding a moving menagerie, 'All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.' No, my son, that form of evolution which makes men, dogs, apes, buzzards, whales, lizards, mosquitoes, tumblebugs, sponges, oysters, snakes, and wiggletails all members of one family—as so many cousins and uncles—is a put-up job. For, He that made them all—from a microbe to a mastodon—with every opportunity to know, says, 'All flesh is not the same flesh;' and here is an ocular demonstration thereof."

As the hour for the performance drew on, Toadville became a hive of swarming humanity. Many persons passed Shakerag my father believed would never darken a tent, taking, apparently against their will, their little boys to the menagerie. My father caught the idea.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed he, turning to mother, "this is nothing, after all, but a zoölogical exhibition—a very worthy thing. Every boy on top of the ground ought to see it."

"Then," said my mother, with true womanly insight, "if you want Heredity to see the circus, let him go with one of the neighbors."

"Fi-diddle!" ejaculated my father, "you women never do see the true inwardness of things, Pollina. Don't

you know that a show has to be approached from the moral side, and that Heredity will need an ethical guide in the midst of peculiar dangers?"

"That being the case," answered my mother, showing spirit, "I had better take Red myself, for I have been almost alone his moral guide ever since he was born."

"Whew! Pollina Beans at a show!" father snorted. Thus the argument closed; and my father, looking at me, commanded with some excitement for me to "get ready, my boy, and we'll go to see the animals."

"Quick! old chap; the band's tooting away now. Ha! ha! ha!" laughed he, in superlative ecstasies. "It's a good idea, old boy, to have an indulgent pap to go along to prevent your morals from being impaired, and to keep off accidents."

I never had known little boys to be so popular before, nor how much a parent would sacrifice for a child. In view of enhancing my pleasures his face shone with joy, while his whole conduct became hilarious. Half the gentlemen in the vicinity seemed to be in search of little boys to take to the circus, and when the youngsters began to get scarce, several gentlemen clubbed together on a single lad.

Never until this hour had I understood the full significance of the word joy, or experienced all that youth conceives to be embraced in glory. What emotions spring in a boy's heart as he buys a ticket and for the first time steps into a circus. His eyes behold undreamed wonders; he stands amidst constellations of curiosities; he lives in a new world. Father, observing the extent of my enthusiasm, sought to enjoin

upon me proper ethics by saying: "Touch not, taste not, handle not, my son."

But orthodoxy stands at a disadvantage in a show, while the best maxims have to be treasured up for future use. I could but notice, however, how fully my father was in sympathy with me in all my joys. He seemed even to be enraptured himself—on my account, of course. It affected me deeply. How self-sacrificing he was to immolate his most cherished convictions and decapitate his lifelong scruples just to give his little boy two hours of pleasure! Oblivious of his own pleasures, he appeared to enter into mine; and, notwithstanding the inward struggle it must have caused him, when the clown, like a painted zebra, turned a somersault in the air over a drove of horses and a pair of elephants, he clapped his hands and shouted: "Splendid!" But fearing this seeming approbation might corrupt my morals, he added soberly, by way of atonement: "Look not on the wine when it is red, nor on the clown when he is in the air. Keep your eye on the animals, my son."

Two delirious hours well-nigh had elapsed, when the ringmaster trotted out a young mule, named Bucephalus, stating that he would give the animal to any boy who could ride him out of the ring. About forty boys in turn tried their skill, and the same forty were relegated to the dust. Jack Cheesequakes, son of my nearest neighbor, experimented a little, but without favorable result. I wished to speculate a bit myself, but fearing a paternal rebuke, hesitated until I heard my father whisper to the elder Cheesequakes with ill-concealed emotion: "I'll be bound if I couldn't have

ridden that mule when I was a boy. There never was a beast that walked on four legs that could have flounced me, when I was a lad; but boys have deteriorated these days."

I took this as a direct reflection upon myself; so, slipping quietly from my seat, I leaped upon Bucephalus, determined to stick there. Locking my legs around his neck, and clasping my hands around his tail, after a desperate struggle of five minutes, I rode the discomfited animal out of the ring amidst deafening cheers. Thus did I acquire a beast that became famous with me.

It was now that my father's experience reached a climax. He jumped into the middle of the ring, shook hands with the clown, and made a short address to the audience, declaring that he had the grandest boy that ever shot a marble.

"Chip off the old block, that boy Red is!" he assured everybody. "Yes; ladies and gentlemen, that youngster is the terminus of the law of heredity, and he was born and reared under a *carveat*. Nothing like good stock, Mr. Ringmaster; every baby under the sun ought to come through the Patent Office." Then he recited Hector's farewell to his infant son:

"O Jupiter and all ye deities,
Vouchsafe that this my son may yet become
Among the Trojans eminent like me,
And nobly rule in Ilium! May they say:
'This man is greater than his father was.'"

The great pavilion was speedily emptied, and the restless multitude sauntered home, or else sought fur-

ther diversion in the numerous sideshows that advertised their charms in the most tempting way. We had bent our faces homeward, my mule readily following his tether, when a strain of lively music sounded from an open tent not far from our path. Father suddenly stopped, and remembering he had "a little business to attend to," gave me a peremptory command to go straight home and tell my mother that I had acted nicely, and that he would be home directly. This I did.

Mother snatched her poke bonnet, went to the village, and arrived at a spacious tent, guided by the tinny notes of a hand-organ, just in time to see my father waving a baton and riding in high glee on a merry-go-round. When the machine came to a stop, she simply faced her husband, saying: "Why, Cuke Beans! What about those high-sounding theories now?"

"Oh! Pollina, theories don't work at a show," returned my wise parent.

THE SHOW'S AFTERMATH

Chapter III.

THE circus and its marvels faded from my vision like the glorious pageant of a dream, but their subtle influences remained. I never parade before a curious public the secrets of home life, but, since a show cannot well be conceived as a private matter, I do not feel that I am violating domestic proprieties in what I am about to relate, though it occurred in the attic at Shakerag.

Yes, it was in the attic. My father had been strangely affected by the circus; a meal never passed without his animadverting to some feature that especially pleased him. He could describe all the animals, repeat the clown's jokes, and even sing a stanza here and there from the comic song book he had purchased. He always had been kind and jovial to his family, but now he was simply a child again. He never played so many pranks, and laughed with such boyish glee as since the performance at the circus. One morning at breakfast, however, his hilarity was checked quite effectually, though unintentionally, when mother displayed a picture of the fat woman, which she had found in the inner pocket of his coat while the garment had been undergoing repairs. Like a noted king he never smiled again—during breakfast.

Meanwhile, a strange malady swept over Toadville and the surrounding country, against which there was no available quarantine. It crept into homes that were thought to be proof against such distempers, and affected the old as well as the young. My father caught it, and for seven weeks had a severe attack of circus disease.

I repeat, it was in the attic. My father and 'Squire Cheesequakes had slipped quietly up to the loft, a thing they never had been known to do, and now and then suppressed notes of the jolliest laughter could be heard on the ground floor. My mother suspected something at once.

"Heredity," said she, "your father and old Cheesequakes are playing circus in the garret. We'll go up and surprise them."

And she was "all in a tickle," for a joke on father was her delight, but his abomination. We, she with joyous face and I in a broad grin, stealthily climbed up to the attic by means of a ladder that stood always ready for that purpose, the laughter becoming more and more distinct as we ascended. I began to giggle at the prospect before us.

"Hush!" said mother, "don't disturb the play of these aged infants."

As we looked through a crack in the partition, we encountered a novel scene. 'Squire Cheesequakes, with a wagon whip in his hand, was performing the part of ringmaster. He wore a spiketail coat, which no doubt had witnessed many another jocund occasion, including perhaps his wedding day, and poised upon his head was a stovepipe hat that had passed

through a similar experience. As for my mother's husband, he had assumed the role of clown. His paraphernalia consisted mainly of a dilapidated felt hat shorn of its brim and with its crown punched into a pyramid, a striped shirt without a collar, breeches curtailed to the knee, and patched with squares of different colored calico, red prevailing, a pair of black stockings tied with yellow ribbon, and a brace of ancient shoes whitewashed. His face was corked and rouged alternately, whilst his eyebrows were inked and his nose was solid red. Mother scarcely could contain herself, and as for me, I was leaning against the plank partition with her admonishing hand clasped over my mouth to prevent an untimely explosion.

It was indeed a novel scene. Cheesequakes was cracking his whip with painful energy, and father, under its urgings, was making an attempt to jump over a barrel placed between two kegs, and supposed to represent respectively an elephant and a couple of horses. His intentions were excellent, but his nimbleness had rusted a little from age; so finally he came down on his cramp colic athwart the elephant, which walked (that is, rolled) from under him. It is not necessary to remark that, in view of the reverberating properties of an attic, there were sounds, human and inhuman, which resembled the voice of many thunders. But, inasmuch as showmen are not easily disconcerted, the clown sprang into the center of the ring, and, bending double, addressed the ringmaster:

"Why is an elephant like a traveler?"

RINGMASTER: Really, I see no resemblance whatever.



"AS FOR MY MOTHER'S HUSBAND, HE HAD ASSUMED THE ROLE OF CLOWN."

CLOWN: Because he always takes his trunk with him.

RINGMASTER: Very good, sir; have you anything else as original?

CLOWN: Why is a bald-headed man like a brier-patch when a gun is fired near it?

RINGMASTER: Surely you are trifling with language. It is absurd to suppose there is the slightest likeness. Give it up.

CLOWN: Because the hare is gone.

RINGMASTER: Indeed—most excellent! I am surprised that I did not observe the analogy at once. Anything else of a remarkable nature?

CLOWN: I ate some deviled eggs at Coney Island, and they were not bad.

RINGMASTER: Very good, indeed. You are improving rapidly. If you keep it up some day you may be a real clown. Haven't you got something else at the bottom of the joke bag?

CLOWN: Sure. I've got jokes to give away to the joke book. For instance: Why is a barrel of apples like a hot-house?

RINGMASTER: Now don't be foolish. Whoever heard of there being such a likeness? You'll spoil your record by getting off something poor. Still, if you think a barrel of green apples is like a hot-house let's have the answer.

CLOWN: Because they are both full of panes.

RINGMASTER: Why, what do you mean, sir? I don't understand.

CLOWN: Well, if you were as full of green apples as the barrel you'd have as many pains as the glass

hot-house. Do I have to draw a diagram of this joke?

This sally was too much for the old men, and they gave themselves up to unrestrained mirth, swinging to and fro, shouting, slapping their hands together, rubbing their centers of gravity, gasping—faces white—hair standing on end—perspiration flowing—Cheesequakes is seized with hiccoughs—laid out on the floor—father has hysterics—mother enters the door—says: “Why, Cuke Beans!” The fun was over.

STAMPEDED HORNETS

Chapter IV.

BUT circuses die hard. John Robinson left a mighty influence behind him, as the following incident will show: On one occasion, soon after the performance of our parents in the attic, Jack Cheesequakes and myself sat on the farm fence discussing the relative merits of our fathers, each displaying a bit of boyish pride as we recounted the history of their boyhood as it had come direct from sire to son.

"It strikes me, Heredity," said Jack, "that our paps had similar experiences. Both of them played pranks, rode horses nobody else could ride, braved dangers, had narrow escapes, and did a great many things which in these mild times would seem miraculous."

"And it strikes me likewise," rejoined I, "that the present crop of boys has deteriorated since the halcyon days of our ancestors. I have even heard my father time and again say as much. I feel bad about it."

"So do I," moaned Jack. "I'm afraid the race is about to run out. Why, at home I hear nothing but the glorification of the youngsters of a generation back. I wish I had been born a couple of centuries ago when all the boys were heroes, and I too, maybe, might have been something more than meek Jack

Cheesequakes, unknown to fame, unwept, unhonored, and unsung. I might have stolen my neighbor's apples in the night; might have had a victorious fight with the watch-dog, leaving a part of my breeches the size of the dog's mouth in the orchard; and I might have worked tricks with hornet's nests. Shucks! Red, we just ain't nobody."

"You don't pretend to say your daddy, too, speculated in hornets' nests? Why, Jack, I believe every boy in the good old times used to have something to do with hornets' nests. I have heard my father tell about his doings with hornets, and then laugh as if his sides would split; and, falling back in his arm-chair, he would moralize, 'But boys lack a sight of being what they were.' I tell you, Jack, it makes a feller with any spirit feel a heap uncomfortable. How could I help not being born forty years ago?"

"Why, of course you couldn't help it at all, Red, and it makes you feel lonesome to think about it. But don't grieve, old boy, for I'm inclined to think the fault is not in the times, but in the boys. We have not learned much from the instruction of our parents. Every well-regulated boy should have unbounded admiration for his ancestors, and seek in them the model for the plan of his life and character. At all events, that's what I heard Miss Spider tell the class the other day."

"Why, Jack Cheesequakes, you talk like one of the dead sages, and your speech has the ring of sure-enough philosophy. Pa says a boy is the sum of his forebears; then you and I ought to be equal together to eight bears at least. Go on, cub, and speak."

"Well, I was going on to say," quoth Jack, "we might pattern after our fathers and invest our brains in something marvelous. We might begin on a small scale—say work up a hornet trick first—just to see how it would take."

"Dear me, Jacobus, it's the sublimest thing I ever heard of—equal to a circus; and then, that joke is classical, never fails to work, never gets humdrum, and neither loses its novelty nor its point."

"No; not its point," said Jack, with a smile. "But jesting aside, all we lack is an opportunity of sufficient size for the undertaking. Our fathers worked their schemes on individuals, in a small way, in private; but you know, Red, this is an age of progress, and if we are 'equal to the sum of our antecedents' (that's the way the old folks put it) we ought to be able to get up a trick as big as all of theirs put together. It should be, then, on a large scale and played on the public. How about that?"

"Great idea—and, by the way, there's to be a tremendous time, may be two or three of them, at the courthouse next Friday—the gul-o-rious old Fourth of July, you know. Everybody and his stepson will be there. The political parties are to have a barbecue and speeches—candidates a plenty—crowd—see?"

"'Nough said;" quoth Jack.

It was a high day at Toadville, an occasion of special interest to the entire community; politics was rife, great questions were before the people. The streets and lanes of the village were threaded at an early hour with vehicles of every name, age, and style. Carts,

wagons, gigs, buggies, barouches, and carriages in rich profusion were there. As for the people, they were as multitudinous as the sand on the seashore, and as varied as a schoolgirl's airs.

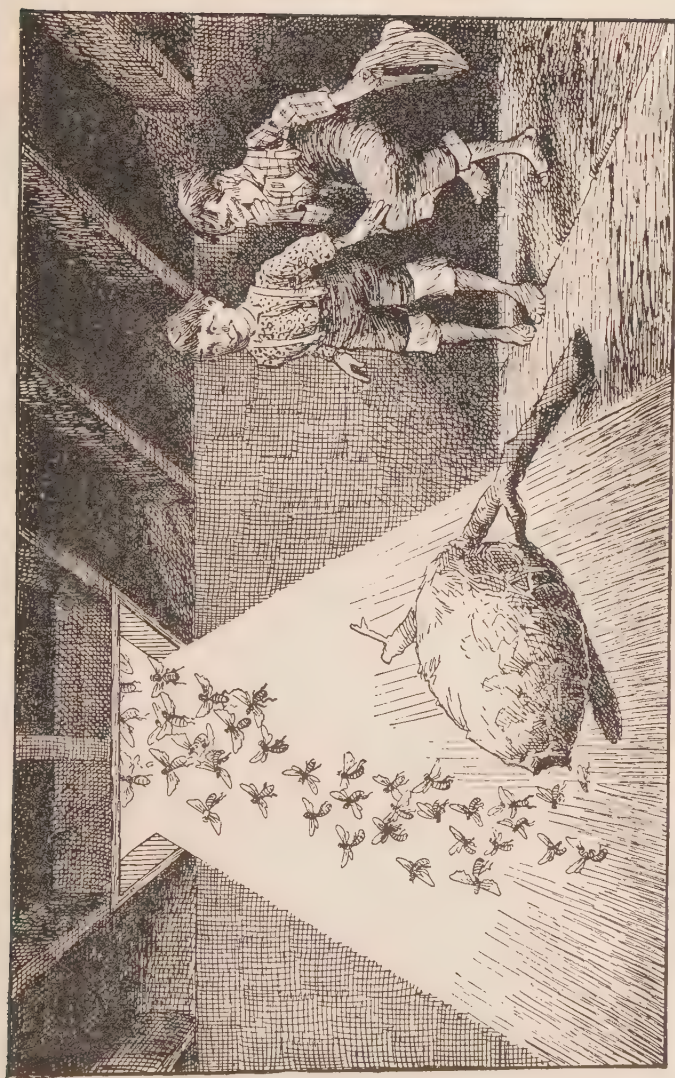
On the evening preceding the great day, Jack and I, having resolved to do something worthy of our forebears, succeeded, after various attempts, in bagging a hornets' nest that we chanced upon in a neighboring patch of woods. Jubilantly we bore our trophy to the courthouse, and deposited it in the cellar underneath. The courthouse literally was packed. Dozens stood anxiously about the windows outside, to catch the magic words as they fell from the lips of the political orators.

'Squire Cheesequakes opened the meeting, and introduced Duobus Rag, candidate for the Legislature on the Democratic ticket, amid tremendous and prolonged applause. The personality of the said Rag, though somewhat peculiar, was nevertheless quite impressive, and stamped him at once as being a man of no ordinary power. He had neither grace nor culture, but possessed, instead, personal magnetism to a remarkable degree. His sandy hair, carelessly parted, and most of it departed, his broad red face and redder nose, his deep penetrating voice, that could have filled the Parthenon, or made vocal every recess of the Pantheon, his stout frame, slightly inclined to rotundity, and his small keen eyes—all bespoke for him attention before any audience.

The question agitating the public mind at that time related to a scheme on the part of the Consolidated Navigation Company to construct a canal from Squab

River to Toadville, a distance of seven miles. It was a matter for popular vote, and, consequently, all candidates for office were required to voice their shibboleths touching it. The merits of the question, as presented by the two leading politicians, will form the subject of the next chapter. Suffices it here to say, that Nebuchadnezzar Quid, Republican candidate for the Legislature, just about the opposite of Duobus Rag in every way, was rendering his peroration with great satisfaction to his party, unremittingly smiting a Patent Office Report with his magnificent fist (much to my father's anxiety for a certain *carveat*, supposed by him to make the Report worthy of more respectful treatment) until from the battered book echoes rang in every nook and corner of the crowded edifice. Perspiration streamed down his cheeks; his eyes flashed fire—that is, one of them did; the other didn't flash, owing to an accident dating back a couple of years to a fist-fight in a political canvass—his lips quivered; and tremendous thunders rolled from his tongue. The effect was prodigious. Hundreds of hands were clapping, and many tongues were screaming: "Hurrah!"

A moment and the work was done. We dragged the bag containing the hornets and their nest to a spot directly beneath an opening in the floor overhead—an opening left by some carpenters who had been preparing to install a newfangled heating apparatus and had been forced to suspend operations because of the meeting. Jack and your humble servant deftly drew the bag from around the nest, gave it a kick, and then retired into the background. The hornets, angry at such treatment, issued forth and naturally headed to-



"THE HORNETS, ANGRY AT SUCH TREATMENT, ISSUED FORTH."

ward the opening overhead, through which a flood of light poured. In less than a jiffy they had invaded the meeting bent on vengeance.

They began attacking chiefly those who most assiduously clapped their hands. Somehow, hornets don't like a fuss, and in their efforts to stop it only increased the excitement many per cent. Meanwhile, my father took advantage of the occasion to warn political sinners of election day and ventilate his views on heredity, while Duobus Rag, whose ways suggested the Judgment, made a commendable effort to climb the bell-rope. Never in my life have I known windows and doors to be in more active demand. It is surprising how a politician who has been lying can jump with the aid of a hornet. Hop—skip—and a jump! Through all the orifices of the courthouse rushed the surging throng. Last of all went 'Squire Cheesequakes, leaping, to the great praise of his agility, straight through the open window, brushing a pair of hornets from his bald head, and crying with unabated energy, and some truth, "Deliver me from the tail-end of a circus!"

Must I let the curtain drop? I shall not relate what took place at our house in the early morn of the next day, when I was unceremoniously roused from my slumbers while in no condition to defend myself, but am I in a position to explain why the old peach tree that shaded the well was minus its choicest limb? I shall not say I didn't get my breakfast till dinner, but I will say, that in this life we follow examples rather than creeds.

Mother seized the occasion to moralize on evolu-

tion and shows and to administer a scathing rebuke to my revered parent, her husband.

"Cuke Beans," said she, "I hope you see that recent occurrences have dissipated your big notions about heredity into thin air, and that little Beans is nothing but big Beans made over, a trifle improved by what he inherits from his mother. And moreover, big Beans, I trust you see the folly of trying to raise little Beans under the shadow of a circus tent and with the ideals furnished by a clown."

Exit magnus Beans; ridet Beans parvus.

TOADVILLE'S BARBECUE

Chapter V.

THERE were some items connected with the great Fourth of July celebration that I thought best to take from the docket in the last chapter, before entering the cloudy realms of Possum County politics. Thus relieved I now turn in better spirit to that occasion.

A barbecue, especially a barbecue in the midst of an exciting canvass, always has had considerable influence on the children of men—and fully as much on the children of women. Well, it really is a big thing. The first great movement in human history started from something to eat, a primitive sort of bread-riot, you may say. One morning, presumably the Fourth of July, Independence Day, you know, Mrs. Eve Adam felt too enervated by the climate to cook breakfast, and so walked herself off to look for an easy meal. Then, too, there is no evidence that she swept her husband's room that morning, or dusted the furniture, or let down the piano-cover, or brushed the cobwebs from the hat-rack, or set the table, or even wound the clock, or put Mr. Adam's boots in place.

But there are some extenuating circumstances. She was just from school, without a mother, young, beautiful, petted by every man on the face of the earth, inexperienced, and a female. It must be remembered,

moreover, that the colleges of that day taught neither reading nor writing, much less the sciences of cooking and housekeeping, while even the University of Eden imparted only scant instruction except on the general subjects of courtship and marriage. And many people don't study any other branches now.

This leads me to say that I have always felt sorry for Adam, because he had no choice in regard to his marriage. Think of it—a man without a choice—he had to take the first woman he came across! It is proper to say here (and the statement never has been contradicted so far as I know) that when Adam first made a proposition of marriage to Miss Eve, she told him that it was “so sudden” and that she “never expected to marry.” A change, however, came over her affections, when one day Mr. Adam gave her a box of chocolates, a bottle of cologne, and a nickel's worth of chewing-gum. Great is the stomach in the destinies of the race. And Eve became Mrs. Adam; if she hadn't, there would have been no barbecue at Toadville.

But the barbecue was not the only attraction that drew together the immense throng of folks on the Fourth of July, for there was a question before the people of Possum County in which all men were interested, and on which all had taken sides save those human donkeys that trade their votes for money or whisky. Yes, a great question was up. By their votes the citizens of Possum County must decide whether a canal should be cut from Squab River to Toadville, a distance of seven miles. A great theme, this, for the shooting of rhetorical skyrockets and the

display of soapsud fountains. An august occasion, too, worthy of a Webster or a Clay. The object of the orators was to set forth the merits and demerits of the proposed canal, each according to his party point of view. In favor of the canal spoke Duobus Rag, as the first orator.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, with time-honored triteness, "a tremendous industrial problem is facing us; and, like Blanco's ghost [he meant Banquo's], it will not down. The hour is big with destiny. The welfare of Possum County for a thousand years, in the phantom shapes of wealth, art, and progress, will hover benignly over the result of this election, even as the silver moons revolve about Saturn, should the sacred ballot-box sing the siren song of the canal.

"Such, indeed, would be a red-letter day in the annals of our ancient town, when the beatitudes of joy would clap their hands, and the symphonies of song would rise in mighty cadence, roll on cyclonic wheels from star to star in the fire-lit pyrean, fill the unmeasured universe with music, and at nightfall die away in pensive sobs, to be renewed each morning, as, in the golden light of the sun, labor strikes its thousand anvils. [Did Henry Clay ever beat that?] Gifted pens and eloquent tongues have thrilled us with their magic recitals of the character and dignity of tariff, currency, war, and slavery; but these themes are but the paltry politics of a tin god, whose shrine is in the alley and the slum, compared with the Squab River canal, which even now, in vision, I see moving before us in queenly majesty, crowned with the diamonds of a new industry, opening up a great water-way to the swift-winged

commerce of the world, and in days to come the airships of the universe.

"Fellow-townsmen [seventeen voters], Toadville, at a distance of seven miles from the great hydrographic [a little mixed again, but Toadville didn't mind] arteries of the country, never can become a sea-port town. It never can rank in commercial importance with New York, Chicago, or even San Francisco, unless it be connected with the high seas, whose billowy waves break in thundering orchestras on the rocky keys of old earth, sending pulsations, of rhythmic melody to the far-off fiery center of the globe. Let every man in whose breast beats the love of country, hasten the glad day when Toadville shall lift her proud head in pæans of victory to the emblazoned heaven, bending beneath its crown of stars to behold the glory of a redeemed town.

"Give Toadville a canal, give her water communication with the nations of the world, and in five short years, instead of eighty-five souls all told, there will be one hundred thousand within her walls, all of them rich, all happy, all wise. Instead of a dozen huts, there will be brick mansions, brown-stone fronts, and marble palaces, gracing asphalt avenues five miles long. There will be numerous parks in which feathered choirs will charm the listening ears of ecstatic multitudes. The buzz of factories will swell in ever-increasing cadences, until in liquid softness it strikes sympathetic chords on the philharmonic harp of the universe, whose strings vibrate and reëcho in tireless music forever.

(At this point Daniel Webster kicked the bottom

out of his coffin because in his lifetime he never had done so well. Thus can the great be jealous even in death.)

“Then, as the poet’s line suggests, a year of Toadville will be worth a cycle of Cathay. Then Possum County will blossom as the rose; great ships will anchor in her canal, proud navies ride on her waters, and the wealth of the globe will unload itself at her golden portals. Orpheus will sing in Toadville’s streets melodies so touching as to bring iron tears from the eyes of Pluto, while splendor-crowned Fame, amid amaranthine odors, will sit in her temple of commerce, reigning with benign scepter over the grandest people on the face of the earth.”

Thus closed the speech of the young political wind-bag, amid a tumult, screaming, wild and indiscriminate ejaculations, hurraing raised to a hysterical pitch, and a general hubbub that would have made a tornado feel lonesome. If there could be anything in wind, the canal was a sure thing. After the winds, as Virgil would say, had been shut up in a cave, Nebuchadnezzar Quid took his stand on the platform, the opponent of Rag, and in every way his opposite.

“Fellow-citizens of Possum County,” said he, “as the candidate on the Republican side of the canal; before this respectable and intelligent gathering, I am proud to present the claims of the G. O. P.—that is, Good Old Possum. Toadville may need a canal to wash its rags in [a fourth of the inhabitants belonged to the Rag family], but this grand old county, which is dearer to me than my life, will wash itself of the ditch business without any water, in the ballot-box.



"IF THERE COULD BE ANYTHING IN WIND, THE CANAL WAS A SURE THING."

“Possumites, lend me your ears, that ye may hear! Squab River! And what is Squab River but the old intermittent brook, known, until a petition was sent to Congress for an appropriation, as Squab Creek, which dries up in summer and freezes up in winter? Its average depth is three inches, and its mean width is two and a half feet. It has been known to be dammed at flood tide, by a pumpkin falling into it; and recently, when John Robinson’s circus passed over it, the elephant took a few swallows and dried up this Democratic stream for a day and a night, and it began to flow again only when a passing farmer dropped a watermelon into it.

“And, fellow-citizens, what is Toadville, that it should have a canal furnished by the government, that it should wear a golden bib and be rocked in a silver cradle? What is this precocious political infant that it should cut teeth of pearl, gnaw a rattle of precious gems, swing in gilded ropes, shoot into the ring of honest labor with a diamond taw, and ride a hobby-horse with his mouth in the treasury of the United States? The Toadville that we know is noted only for mosquitoes and Rags [continued applause]; it is found on but one map in the world, and that is a diagram, gotten up to show to Congress, at the terminus of a broad canal floating all the varied crafts of commerce; indeed it appears a great city with paper streets and ink homes.

“Verily a diagram hath power to soothe the Congressional breast, when its party leaders demand treasons, strategems, and spoils. [Note the way Quid mauled dear old Shakespeare.] The Appropriation

Committee proposes to make a city out of toads, ground-peas, and rags [more applause]; and a river out of dirt. Toadville, removed from the diagram, has thirteen houses, besides a courthouse and a jail. Two of these mighty, sky-scraping structures are hen-houses, and one a barn. I lived within nine miles of Toadville, but never heard thereof until I was nineteen years old—and I was a pretty precocious youth. Even then, it came to my knowledge only when my father sent me to sell a peck of apples, which glutted the Toadville market for a week.

“Suppose we get a canal, and have a river made at the expense of the government; where will the water come from? Toadville's orators could furnish the wind, but where, oh! where is the aqueous fluid to be found? Squab River can't furnish water enough to float an Indian canoe, and, if Possum County should vote for the canal, it would have to get up another petition to Congress to invent some hydraulic machinery for manufacturing water to fill it. That's too big a job to expect of a small spring. I have read—that is, I have heard my grandfather read—in the good Book about clouds without water, but in all my life I never heard of canals without water. You see, fellow-citizens, the Bible is against artificial waterworks, whether rivers, canals, or clouds. And I, therefore, call upon all good people, both laymen and clergymen, to enter their pious protest against this whole nefarious business.

“I here assert, as an honest patriot, that it would take a thousand men ten years to turn this rocky ridge into a canal, at an expense of six million dollars; and,

moreover, it would consume all the balance of money now in the United States Treasury, or that ever will be therein, to supply the necessary water to float a first-class tugboat. If Toadville wants to become a seaport town, let it remove to the seashore. This would be easy and practical, and highly beneficial to the purity of Possum County government. And then it could be done without expense, since a couple of goat-carts could carry all that is valuable in Toadville—Rags and all. [Loud cheers.]

“Then, fellow-citizens, there is a sad feature connected with this enterprise that my opponent has not been frank enough to notice. Don’t you know that a canal always brings flies, gnats, chinchies, bats, fleas, frogs, measles, pneumonia, whooping-cough, rheumatism, mumps, blind-staggers, insanity, cholera morbus, and hiccoughs? Don’t you know that it would change the weather, reverse the points of the compass, and cause snow, vapor, fog, and blizzards? Yes, my countrymen, the weather would have hysterics, and every farmer in Possum County would have to wear a thermometer on his breeches leg to warn him of the sudden approach of chills and fevers. My friends, it is a corrupt party that would thus trample upon our liberties and destroy our homes. I would rather be a dog and bay the moon than such a Possumite. I would rather be a martyr, crimsoning the earth with my blood, than to filch the treasury of my country or rob my county of its inalienable rights. Once, now, and forever, give me liberty or give me death!” [Immense cheering—prolonged shouts—pandemonium squeals.]

It was at this juncture, as the flood of patriotic ora-

tory floated down from above, that the hornet episode took place. It has troubled my conscience ever since.

In due process of time things settled, hornets, coffee, and people. The feast began. Both candidates stood at the festive board on the court green, surrounded by their partisans, each esteemed a hero. Duobus Rag had a happy twinkle in his eye at the prospect of the golden showers he expected to fall from fiscal skies into the pockets of his followers, and of course securing to him any office in the gift of his constituency. Nebuchadnezzar Quid had the look of an honest man that was about to perform a trick. Van Gobler, candidate for constable, stood by him.

"Nebuchadnezzar," said Van Gobler, "that was the speech of your life. It will carry the country against the canal as sure as gun-shooting."

"Yes, old boy," replied Quid; "the appropriation is as dead as Hector. Rag's old party is corrupt, made up of knaves. There ain't an honest man in it; not an individual that is a true patriot and above reproach. Then, you know well enough, Van Gobler, that if these rotten Democrats get this immense appropriation from the government, I can't induce Congress to vote a million dollars to change the county seat from Toadville to Gold Center, my old sand-farm, you know, worth seventy cents per acre, but mighty good for a town. Then, you see, we'll get appropriations for a courthouse and a jail and a post office—say a million dollars for the farm and all. But don't ever mention this to these thieving Democrats."

THE CAPERS OF CUPID

Chapter VI.

WHEN a boy first discovers in his mother's mirror an incipient hair on each side of his nose and just below that organ, and the charity of his parents and the imagination of the girls denominate it a mustache, he is a novel and amusing phenomenon. He is a bundle of dreams, ambitions, and crudities. At times he appears to be almost rational and nearly human. He stands on a spot between babydom and manhood, where the indefiniteness of the babe begins to wane and the aspirations of the man begin to wax. His most cherished possessions are a Barlow knife, a rusty nail, a popgun, a billy goat, a dirt marble, and a sweetheart. It is of this last piece of goods I now wish to speak.

When, for the first time, I deemed it my supreme duty to fall in love, the unwholesome reflection haunted me that I was advancing in age, and that I was losing much valuable time which should be devoted to the mysteries of courtship. I barely had entered my teens, and was without a sweetheart! This was a serious disgrace to the family record—an amazing dishonor to the training of my parents. Had they not carefully and persistently filled my mind with the great theme of love from my earliest recollection? When heaven,

hell, the immortality of the soul, things present, things to come, things above the earth, things on the earth, things under the earth, and the earth itself, had all been made subordinate to this vast subject, what waited I for?

I sat down and wept until the noon hour; then my mother appeased me with peas. There is no fixed gulf between the heart and the stomach of a lad, for joys that would pass from one to the other have well-marked channels. Still, in my reverie I said: "Arise, Heredity Beans, shake thyself from the dust, anoint thy head with oil, tie a small rainbow about thy neck, and start upon thy adventurous career, killing lions and eating honey, to charm one of the daughters of Philistia!" Thus did I resolve to wipe out my reproach, and take rank with the good and wise of all ages.

True, I could ride colts, wear scarlet cravats on Sundays, and smoke cigarettes (for which my parents should have made me smoke in a different fashion), but after all, mused I, when kings lose their crowns, and comets their tails, what is a fellow to do without a sweetheart? The very thought caused a funeral procession of melancholies to parade all the avenues of my disturbed imagination. I wept again, and this time my mother mollified my melancholy with melons, whilst the melody of heart and stomach remained unbroken.

But just how to begin a love matter, I knew not. I always had shunned the society of girls; not because I did not have a secret admiration for the sex, but, to tell the truth, because I was afraid of them. A girl

always had seemed to me to be a formidable affair, anyhow. I never went into a store that sold calico without turning pale, and I never climbed a sweet-gum tree but that its oozing resin reminded me painfully of the young females who so universally fed on it. I never beheld a bird of bright plumage flying in the open sky but that it sadly recalled a maiden's hat, and caused me to flee to the nearest cave, or else to prostrate myself on the ground in a nervous spasm. If I saw a bottle of pickles or a green apple, my heart beat faster. If I saw a ribbon lying in the road, I would ride around it if possible, or urge Bucephalus past it at his best speed. If a mouse or a bat came my way, I nearly lost my breath, for I fancied I heard the scream of young females. I was strangely affected by the sight of a maid, and nearly everywhere I beheld something that reminded me of the sex; hence, I was always apprehensive.

I think this virgophobia, or fear of girls—if I may be permitted to manufacture a word—was brought on by an unfortunate experience in my early history. I attended a Sunday-school picnic, as sweet and as innocent as could be, and was seated on a stump in an oak thicket with my face buried in a rind that a few moments before had contained half a watermelon. I was licking up the last sugary water, when an occurrence occurred. A dozen maidens with flowing hair, having discovered my blissful retreat, invaded it, yelling at the full horse-power of their voices, calling me a "mammy's boy," and saying I was as quiet and as gentle as a girl. They said they were going to make me play with them, and that I should not be so girlish.

Their attentions and intentions startled me. I ran a quarter of a mile and jumped into a blackberry patch to hide from my pursuers. But on they sped like young Amazons, splitting the welkin with shrieks that would have made pandemonium feel like a real silence. My heart sank within me. Neither brier, nor entreaties, nor guardian angels could protect me from their wild assault. I made one last heroic effort to free myself from these feminine pagans. I seized the most venturesome one and kissed her soundly, thinking that surely my enemies all would leave me in horror and high dudgeon. Instead they pressed around me the more furiously, each asseverating that I was mean as a dog if I didn't kiss her the same way. In despair I fainted.

Taking advantage of my prostrate condition, the little savages put an apron on me, curled my hair in imitation of a female's, and then dragged me to the picnic grounds, as, in moments of returning consciousness, I writhed, and pleaded, and wept. But my frantic efforts were of no avail; for my tender captors rolled me over again and again on the grass, as if I had been a barrel, kissing me with the zeal of hornets, and, with the spirit of viragoes, accusing me of being as tame as a little girl.

From this treatment I never recovered. I spent whole nights in the greatest trepidation, at times fancying I saw a brood of winged vipers with balls of fire issuing from their eyes, clad in frocks and aprons, chewing gum, grinning, hissing, squealing, whooping, and looking very much like small female people. Indeed, my excessive fear induced an attack of rheuma-

tism, followed by ague and fever, culminating almost fatally in an aggravated case of mumps. And even to this day, when I hear a girl whoop, cold chills run over me in flocks, and I often lose consciousness.

It is not surprising, then, that on occasions when my mother's friends brought their daughters to Shakerag, I made it convenient to hunt rabbits by day and 'possums by night, and at meal-time find a sweet asylum in a plum nursery. Still I was not so far a heathen but that I would sometimes unconsciously hum the immortal lines,

The rose is red, the violet blue;
Sugar's sweet, and so are you.

Of course, I was dreaming of the ideal maid, not of the specimens I had actually met; and this was my ideal poetry—this the couplet I longed to whisper with unfaltering lip into the ear of some bonnie lass. And yet, the idea of a rough, uncouth, materialized boy, who ate raw potatoes, turnips, and onions, coming within two furlongs of a sure-enough live girl who floated in a sea of cologne and was decked in flounces, bows, ribbons, frizzes, and flowers, seemed a magnificent theory, but at the same time an improbable condition and a sublime impiety. Still, such things occasionally had been done with considerable success, and, I conjectured, might be done again.

At all events, one bright morning in May, an opportunity was given me to test the feasibility of Cupid's art. A huge barouche drove up to Shakerag containing Widow Campbell and her eleven-year-old daughter. I rushed to the window, and gazed and mused.

Hush, all things earthly! Breathe your softest music, and shed your sweetest odors, ye winged zephyrs! Hark! I hear angelic footsteps, and behold cherubic shapes! My reverie is broken—a moment more and I must face destiny! To run or not to run, that was the question. Cold chills, in billows a yard high broke over my trembling body, the blind-staggers, like a cyclone, struck my brain, my bones loosened and rattled. I looked, I saw, I fled. As I ran, I thought how unlike Julius Cæsar I was.

My delay, however, made it impossible for me to escape unobserved, and forced upon me the most trying ordeal of my boyhood. Where is the youth so out of accord with sublunar ethics that he can witness the majestic advance of a widow, flanked on the right by a buxom daughter, gorgeously ribboned and feathered, like an army with banners, without some feeling of alarm? I had attacked hornets, fought wasps, “chunked” dogs, and routed snakes, but I am free to say I never felt, with the single exception of the picnic episode, so great a strain upon my spinal cord, or so severe a test of my courage, as at that moment. Without notice, or seeming lapse of time, the visitors entered the sitting-room with such an uproar of laughter, shrieks, exclamations, and interjections, that I lost control of myself, thinking it was an army storming a fort; and as any prudent person would do, I sought protection under the sofa. I might as well have tried to hide in the moon.

For a boy has but little protection in this world; and in an inappreciable fraction of a second, I was hauled out by my feet—and the feat was Widow Campbell’s.

I was gobbled up, squeezed, mashed, and smothered with kisses. This, too, was by the same widow. What was left of me she stood up on the floor and introduced to Polytechnic Campbell, a pair of years my junior, and a mile or so better looking.

"Howdy!" said I, stuffing both hands into my pockets, and dropping upon a stool in the corner of the room, my head mathematically arranged in the angle of the walls, as if posing for my photograph. Fixed thus, I rolled the whites of my eyes in terror, choking in my throat in the attempt to swallow myself. My mother at length relieved the situation somewhat by suggesting that I should take Polytechnic to the garden and show her the flowers. As an arrow shot from a bow, I darted through the door with the sweetest girl on earth at my heels. But if I could run like a deer, so could she.

In the very act of trying to escape, I felt my heart beat with a new affection and I fell in love with that little vixen the first time she cried: "Wait for me!" And I waited for her, and would have waited till doomsday if need had been. And even now, at this late day, I often have to wait for her, just as I did then. But that's getting ahead of my story somewhat, I think, and therefore to it we will return.

In the garden I pointed out the pinks and the lilacs, showed her some hills of corn I had planted, expatiated on a pumpkin vine, one of whose expansive leaves I plucked to shade her as a parasol; gathered a quart of sweet-betsies and poured them into her apron, hung a verbena on each ear, made a ring of cypress vine for her finger, wove bracelets of honeysuckle for

her wrists, twisted a spiræa crown, studded with geranium leaves, rosebuds, and pansies, for her brow, and became superabundantly happy in my new rôle of escort.

After half an hour of ecstatic peregrination through the walks of the garden, thinking possibly my young acquaintance might be sufficiently human to enjoy a bit of fruit, I led her to a superb cherry tree in full and glorious bearing. To show the utmost extent of my nimbleness, I leaped into the tree, and in a moment seized the topmost cherry on the highest limb, and this I dropped into Polytechnic's uplifted hands. When I had filled my cap with fruit, and displayed all the possible agilities of a squirrel, I put a tempting cherry in my lips, half-disclosed, and hanging from a limb by my toes, clasped Polytechnic's hands in mine, and lifted her up to share the luscious morsel. But in spite of every precaution, I was near swallowing the cherry—and the girl too—as our lips came into inevitable collision. She, of course, blushed and administered a soft rebuke, which was natural and right, and which I easily forgave. As for her part, when I explained how exceedingly difficult it is to prevent such things, no matter how circumspect one may be, she instantly was appeased. It is my opinion, after considerable observation, that a girl thoroughly, satisfactorily, and finally appeased, is one of the most interesting spectacles in nature. Like the glad earth, when storm, and cloud, and thunder and lightning give place to a splendid sky, she marshals forth all the atoms of possible loveliness, which she combines into molecules of superb and bewitching beauty.

In the great kindness of her reconciled heart, the little goddess said, with the rising inflection: "Let's be sweethearts, Red." I started to run. She gently laid her hand on my arm, exclaiming: "Oh, you naughty boy! Look at me." I looked at her. Virgophobia, so far as she was concerned, instantly left me. This was love's beginning.

But how to continue this beatific state became a matter of serious perplexity. The idea of sitting serenely down under a cherry tree and entertaining a maiden who was bubbling over with life and romance seemed a provoking abstraction. I never had studied interjections, and was, hence, incapacitated for conversing with a girl; but something must be done, or I should disgrace myself and lose the favor of my young acquaintance besides. So I stood on my head, jumped up and cracked my heels together three times before touching the ground, turned a couple of somersaults, and crowed a time or two. These antics were capital while they lasted, but as every youth knows, repeated antics rapidly become stale. What to do next was a Gordian knot. Defeat seemed inevitable. Surrender and ignominy were imminent. I could not converse, and at the same time had capered myself out. What next? I felt that I would undertake any or all of the twelve labors of Hercules, or even join the daughters of Danaus in their task of drawing water in sieves, if I could but finish my first interview with Polytechnic creditably.

But just at this crisis, a dark shadow fell over my young life—my harmless, unsuspecting, little life. My faith in female infants was being restored rapidly, and



“ ‘LET’S BE SWEETHEARTS, RED,’ ”

my heart was responding to the gentle touch of feminine love, when this materialized angelet, by a single arctic breath, chilled the caldron in which my fondest hopes and a few small dreams were simmering.

"Red," said she—even she—"you are so real nice, I want you to come to my next birthday party. Tooth-pick will be there. Ma says he is the finest catch in the neighborhood. He is my other sweetheart, you know."

"My other sweetheart!" Is life worth living? I fell down to the ground and bellowed. Streams of steel-blue smoke issued from my nostrils; flames of fire burst from my eyes; my heart thumped against my ribs; my liver burst; my backbone warped and cracked; my arms swayed to and fro without control; my legs twisted together; my lips protruded; my ears shriveled; my neck stretched and bent; my toes stuck together; my finger-nails split; my hair came out in batches; my skin peeled off in flakes; and my brain rolled round like a marble in a cavity. At least, all this seemed to happen.

Suddenly I sprang to my feet, resolving by deeds of heroism to win Polytechnic Campbell, and to wipe up the very dust with my rival. This was another young dream. I cast up in my mind whatever seemed perilous, heroic, or glorious, until at length a lucky idea struck me, making it possible for me to cover myself with glory.

"Polytechnic," said I, as I broke my silence, aglow with hope; "you doubtless have read that the wise cogitate much, and that out of the multitude of silence cometh knowledge [said she hadn't read it], and I have

been thinking how I may show you a deed that makes the seven wonders feel lonesome."

Whistling a ditty, I hastily bridled my young circus mule, fancying, as my animal was named Bucephalus, I would play Alexander. Never did dreamer conceive more magnificent vision than passed before me that minute. I led the mule to the front gate, which stood in full view of the veranda where sat the Campbells. All eyes were turned upon me; my father was rushing toward me with wholesome prohibitions; my mother was screaming; and Polytechnic's hands were clasped. As the self-appointed hero of the moment, I mounted the quadruped, sure of applause and immortal glory. But lo! oh! how low!—a lowered neck, a plunge, and an elevated tail were all that was conspicuous about Bucephalus, while, prostrate in the dust, Alexander wept sore.

With one hand on my bruised leg, and the other on my empty stomach, I ingloriously retired to the barn-loft, where, sitting disconsolate, I contemplated suicide. I felt sorry for myself. I wept some tears. Alas! the choice opportunity of my life had slipped, and the golden dream of earthly joy had burst like some gilded bubble. Reclining on a bundle of fodder, I more than once repressed the rising sob, as I rubbed my aching limbs, and dreamily hummed the sad refrain:

'Tis sweet to love,
But oh! how bitter—
To woo a dove,
And fail to git her!

THE SPELLING BEE

Chapter VII.

AFTER my sad experience with Bucephalus, respecting which heretofore I have always, for reasons best known to myself, observed a graceful silence, I grew in stature and in wisdom. I happily renewed the acquaintance of Polytechnic Campbell soon after the melancholy event, and was henceforth moved by a strange inspiration. As men cannot bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, so a boy cannot fetter the sweeter and subtler charms of an unsophisticated lassie; and I would as soon have undertaken to burst the bands of Orion, or put the Seven Stars in my pocket, as to break the magic powers that began to control me. In other words, I was in love.

Polytechnic Campbell! Never was a form so graceful—never was a face so lovely! On each cheek bloomed a scarlet rose—in each rose lived a bewitching dimple. Her lips sometimes would pucker to a shadowy pout, on which would sport at times a heavenly smile. Her eyes—but what shall mortal say of such immortal things?—were as soft as the sky, as bright as a star, and the very temples of Cupid himself, while her flowing tresses were as bright gold as the celebrated fleece of ancient story. But what charmed me most was Polytechnic's voice. It could

be like the sharp note of the pibroch, or the plaintive harmony of soft-sounding flutes. Her silvery tones could imitate at will the gentle murmur of the sea at calm, or the terrible roar of focalized storms. It is needless to say that Miss Campbell was the belle of the neighborhood, and on every public occasion the cynosure of admiring and enraptured youths. Yet, for any creature born of the earth, with mortal tendencies and sublunar mien, to associate himself with Polytechnic, or to aspire to possess her hand, seemed the unholy climax of impertinence. And besides I was in mortal terror of her.

But "what fools these mortals be!" In spite of our clearest conceptions and most positive convictions, we court the impractical and attempt the impossible. And even to this day it makes my hair stand on end—that's the only way my hair can stand—to remember that for one giddy moment I dreamed of wooing Widow Campbell's daughter. To win the favor of my fair neighbor became the absorbing thought of my life, and toward the solution of this problem I devoted all the energies of my soul. As a matter of fact I never tackled a job like it.

In the very beginning, the prize was disputed by a formidable rival, bearing the inharmonious name of Toothpick Wheazles. Toothpick was the Mordecai of my life. He sat at the golden gate of my dreams by night, and crossed my flowery path by day. Like myself, he was enamored, and, most distressingly for me, our affections centered on the same object. He was six months older than myself, a span taller, and in looks had a seventy-five per cent advantage, besides

having money, saw-mills, and a family tree. On the contrary, I had neither money nor saw-mills, but I did have a family tree; for did not my father boast descent from Alfred the Great? Still, the odds were largely against me, I confess, and in any ordinary pursuit I might have been discouraged. But when the prize was nothing less than the hand of Polytechnic Campbell, it was not to be abandoned without a struggle. Incidentally I decided that in that struggle Toothpick must be the loser.

In the schoolroom we stood on equal footing; for there neither saw-mills nor a fat purse can help a boy parse a sentence or solve a problem. Recognizing this pleasant fact, I essayed to make the most of it. The delightful month of June had set in, toward the close of which the final exercises of Toutpantotum Academy were to take place. The chief feature of these exercises was a spelling match, followed by proper ceremonies and festivities. The honor conferred on the successful competitor was the exalted privilege of escorting to the public dinner the lassie he fancied most, and of delivering the valedictory. Before this honor, Olympic glories paled and the golden crowns of kings became dross. Mothers used no greater incentive than to point out to their sons the possibility of some day becoming the crack speller at Toutpantotum Academy, while ambitious fathers directed their boys to no higher goal than the valedictory address, although such direction was often given with a hickory switch.

The bright sun of that great day at length arose. The meadows were decked with flowers and scented with sweetness. The lark sprang from its nest of

thorns and rejoiced in an unclouded sky. Indeed, as one looked on the beauteous heavens and smiling earth, and felt the balmy breath of summer upon the cheek, it seemed as if glad nature were about to run over. At the hour designated, Toutpantotum Academy was crowded. In the audience sat proud fathers and mothers, trembling, fearing, hoping for their sons, while on the rostrum sat twenty-seven boys, half-frightened out of their wits, wishing heartily they never had been born. It's no joke to get a bad case of stage-fright.

As for my part, in the attempt to become oblivious of the multitude, I tried to fasten my eyes on opposite walls at the same time, and to count flies. While I was in the midst of this useful employment, the school bell tapped sharply, and so wrought upon my already excited nervous system, that I was in the attitude of leaping through the window, when Miss Spider announced that the ceremonies would be opened with a song, rendered by the aspiring spellers. I bit my lips at the very thought of singing before such a concourse of people, crossed and uncrossed my legs with sufficient variety, and at last stood up with the class to sing, assuming as nearly as practical the shape of a corkscrew. The only song I cared a fig for was, "The Campbells are comin'." I did not have my choice, however, and sang something else—I think it was "The Star-Spangled Banner"—as best I could, for my voice seemed tied up in big hard knots.

It was a time-honored custom for the audience to put test words to the class, so that there might be no possible collusion between teacher and pupil. It was

a seriously solemn time. My head ached, my heart throbbed, my limbs quaked. The cruel audience laughed and twittered and giggled and blinked, as if nothing of moment were at stake. At length the great assemblage was hushed in silence, and a pin's fall would have been as a pair of earthquakes. Miss Spider invited the multitude to prepare their test words and put them one by one to the class. Then ensued a long and painful silence.

A red-headed man, in a voice which, if the angle of incidence had been right, could have split a gum log, propounded "knot." About half the class backed out. The other half came through with banners flying. Word after word was given, whoever missed being ruled out of the match. This trying process continued until Toothpick and myself were the sole contestants. Wheazles never seemed to be more thoroughly himself, more self-possessed and confident than now. As for myself, I confess to some misgivings; yet I put on the best face possible under the circumstances, assuming the conscious superiority of a man who is himself the author of a spelling book. But the crisis came at last. A slim, dyspeptic maid, made full half a century before, rising in the audience, announced, amid melancholy stillness, "gnat." And on the orthography of this word we were allowed three minutes to reflect before imperiling our reputations. You can imagine that we took the limit.

Excitement was running high in the assembly, and I myself began to realize the situation. Wheazle's relatives and friends were shouting, "Hurrah for Toothpick!" Mine were shrieking, "Three cheers for

Heredity!" My parents, standing on tiptoe, turned their loving eyes upon me; and as I met my father's gaze, I remembered his promise to give me the old spotted billy goat, in case of my success. This moved me greatly—but what is a billy, nay, two billies, compared with the esteem of a bewitching girl? After all, it was Polytechnic I wanted. And it was Polytechnic I intended to get.

As this reflection was passing through my mind, I chanced to discover in a distant part of the room a pair of eyes beaming on me, and shining like two morning stars in a cloudless sky. Why were they turned upon me? What meant those cheeks, crimsoned with blushes that came and died away? What caused that apparent anxiety, now incapable of concealment? But should I fail—what then? Down, horrid thought! The Greek racer at the Olympic games, with the olive crown before him; with poets, historians, and warriors looking on; with all Hellas as witness; with fires of proud ambition burning in his soul, never felt more at stake, never experienced intenser agony than did Heredity Beans at that moment. It was the worst five minutes I ever spent.

"Gnat" was the word in question. Toothpick's turn came first. Remembering there was a peculiarity about the word, he spelled it in a peculiar way. "N-a-g-h-t," cried my competitor, with profound complacency. All eyes now turned toward me. Drawing in a surplus of wind, and fixing my eyes on the rafters, with my hands in my pockets, and my legs arranged into a scalene triangle, I chortled with an infinitude of delight and authority, "g-n-a-t." "Right! right!"

shouted the vast audience. My father clapped his hands, exclaiming, "Knowledge is power!" My mother fainted for very joy. My own heart fluttered, and my head swam as I sat on the rostrum "whence all but me had fled," while, in accordance with the etiquette the occasion demanded, I crossed my legs, blew my nose, and smiled. Gnats had often been in my eyes before, but never did they seem so exalted in my sight as then.

My classmates having disposed of their oratory and gestures, it became my painful duty to deliver the valedictory address for which the impatient audience was clamoring. Toothpick had just taken his seat, having alluded to me as a penniless and savage youngster, unsoothed by the music of a family saw-mill. Then, introduced by Miss Spider as the most illustrious speller in the institution, I arose.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said I, in a voice frazzled by modesty, emotion, and stage-fright. "This is the supreme epoch of my life—the golden hour of my history. But language fails me. [Took a drink of water.] For this hour I have lived and—er—um—and died. My most cherished dreams are realized. There seems nothing further for me in life. The end is reached, the goal attained. Farewell! [Water and applause.]

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen, this occasion, if there is any of it left, will go down through the ages bright with immortality. The future historian will draw from the records of to-day, and the moralist will tithe the marvels you behold to paint a model or adorn a tail. [You see I got somewhat mixed here.] By the



"MY FATHER CLAPPED HIS HANDS, EXCLAIMING: 'KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!'"

recital of these things the young will be stirred to increased diligence. But [more water] these things do not make me proud. Although I shall live in the nation's records, be embalmed in verse, and pictured on the brightest pages of the Second Reader, I repeat, these things do not make me proud. Though generations shall point to me with pride, and affectionately link my name with Cadmus and Robinson Crusoe, still, I bear it with resignation and fortitude. Genius must pay the tribute imposed upon it. Farewell! [Water and loud cheers.]

"Now it becomes my painful duty to say farewell. To you, my dear competitor, I extend the greeting of sympathy. You have fallen in a noble cause, and should submit to the ruling of fate. Your calamity is not due to lack of industry and want of zeal, but to attenuation of brains, for which you are not entirely responsible. Allow me, as one deeply interested in you, to say, my fellow-speller, that it is dangerous to strain at a gnat and seek to swallow a Campbell. [Polytechnic blushed and the people cheered.] But remember, ardent disciple of the spelling book, that when night is darkest, and storms around you roll fiercest, you still have your saw-mill, in whose sepulchral depths you can find a blissful refuge, and listen with dreamful magnificence to the rattling of your ancestors' bones going through it. Farewell! [Water and showers of laughter.]

"To you, ladies and gentlemen, we owe unmeasured gratitude. You have covered yourselves and this occasion with great glory. Your presence has been our inspiration, while your smiles have been the rainbow

glorifying the sky of Toutpantotum Academy. May you live forever and go to your graves in peace. Farewell! [Water and tears.]

“To you, dear teacher, we owe this immortal hour. We never could have risen to such attainments or grasped the golden key of learning, but for your guiding hand. Miss Spider, in the name of the spelling class I say, farewell; and in my own name I say, with ever deepening devotion, with accumulating softness, and with affections flowing in geometrical progression, I love you. You have tried to make this world better. You have sown the seeds of knowledge that to-day have borne their golden harvests. You have been building larger than you knew. Little did you realize what you were doing, when day by day you were training a youth whose fame is bounded only by the confines of matter, and whose record is punctuated with stars.

“Go on with the good work; sow spelling books, and you will reap geniuses. Holmes, in his “Democrat at the Breakfast Table” [mixed again], has remarked that the Boston statehouse is the very center of the solar system; but, kind priestess of learning, by your toil and sacrifice, you have made old Toutpantotum Academy not only the hub of the universe, but the hub-hub of world-renowned spelling bees. Hereafter, at least one mute, inglorious Milton will rise up to call you blessed. Farewell. [The audience applauded, Miss Spider wept, and I choked and drank water.]

“To you, fellow-classmates, I bid a tearful adieu. [Brushed a small tear from my left eye.] We have walked together in these classic shades, and sat within

these renowned walls. But in your tears remember me. You, too, some day, like me, may reap honor and fame. I once dared not dream of standing on this proud eminence. I once thought such dizzy heights impossible; but *labor omnia vincit*. By toil, perseverance, and pluck, you may some day stand in my tracks. I know it seems like a dream to you, but what has been done, may be done again. Remembering that there can be no crown without a cross, on your banner write 'Excelsior,' and let your motto be '*Nil desperandum*.' Now, fond spellers, good-by! And when the sands run low in the glass of time, and the sun empurples the western clouds, and you look back to these halcyon days, you will experience the majesty and mystery of the classic line of the poet, '*reductio ad absurdum*.' Farewell! [Took my seat amid torrents of applause and supernumerary congratulations, particularly upon the excellence of my Latin, which nobody understood.]

The climax had now come, and the excitement, so far from abating, became tenfold more intense. The universal question was, "Who will be the maid of honor? Who will be deemed worthy to go arm-in-arm to the public dinner with the boy who can spell 'gnat?'" Rising to my full proportions, glancing significantly to the four points of the compass, I descended from the stage, and, amid deafening cheers, clapping of hands, and admiring looks, offered my arm to Polytechnic Campbell. Many a girl wilted, but I couldn't help it. What, thought I, are saw-mills, or riches, or Toothpick Wheazleses? Oh! ye transient things of earth, farewell! Tell me not in mournful numbers a little learning is a dangerous thing. Brains, mused I,

brains are what this age demands. Covered with glory, with my most sanguine dreams realized, and with Polytechnic swinging seraph-like on my arm, I led the surging throng to the festive board.

Dinner over, under the wide, spreading branches of the oaks we lingered till late evening, my tongue all the while being the pen of a ready writer. As the jocund hours sped on, I entertained my love with a recital of my narrow escapes from snakes, and matters of like moment, till twilight warned us that for a season the gates of Elysium must close. As a parting token, Polytechnic pinned a white bud on the lapel of my jacket, whispering softly, "Remember the giver!"

"Remember the giver?" repeated I, with softness condensed. "Why, Polytechnic, not only the giver, but the flower, pin, and all, are forever sacred, from the rising of the sun to the demise of the last jay-bird."

Proud of this sentiment, I rushed to a jimson-weed hard by, and plucking its choicest bloom, entwined it in Polytechnic's golden curls. I think I could have written poetry, at this juncture, by the mile instead of by the foot, but the hour was advanced, and tenderly we spoke appropriate words of adieu.

REVIVING SHOUTING CHURCH

Chapter VIII.

THE excitement occasioned by the spelling match had pretty effectually died away, when a "revival" was appointed to begin on the first Sunday in August, creating as much interest in the breasts of the good people of Shouting Church as did the Jewish Pass-over at Jerusalem.

Every housewife in the vicinity, with merry heart and tuneful lips, in view of the "big meetin'," made vigorous preparations, which consisted largely in baking cakes, roasting meats, and frying chickens. Sumptuous tables were spread under the towering oaks of the churchyard, trembling, sighing, and groaning beneath variously-served chicken, lamb, ham, bread, biscuits, potatoes, pickles, custards, pies, and cakes, to say nothing of unmeasured quantities of peaches, apples, grapes, and piles of watermelons dotting the ground everywhere. While many, having the peace and enlargement of Zion at heart, sought the benefits of grace, and strove to bring sinners to a realization of their woe, others, viewing the meeting as a protracted picnic rather than a religious gathering, a season of amusement rather than of spiritual worship, placed the interests of the soul at a fearful minimum, and paid adoration to their stomachs.

After much waiting, the morning of the first Sabbath in August dawned. A magnificent sun bathed hill and dale in waves of golden light, and jubilant throngs of humanity focused at Shouting Church. Many who had not visited a place of worship for ten years or more, were drawn by the curiosity that only a revival, a circus, a baptizing, or a funeral can excite. Even old Brother Crankside was there, whose continued absence had been a source of much grief to the brethren, and Sister Periodical, one of the old standards, who had vowed never to put her foot inside the church door again, came to receive a few drops from the shower of blessings. A number of excluded innocents hung around, indulging the hope that their spiritual shoes might be half-soled and better adapted to Jordan's rugged path, while a variety of broken-down pilgrims sat in the fence-corners of Canaan, exchanging sorrows and desiring to refill their neglected lamps.

The meeting continued from day to day, but the spiritual pulse was slow. Elder Combustible preached furiously, and burst one of his suspenders in the good work, but still the happy moment came not, and sinners scorned the message of love. The ungodly had been urged forward to the "anxious seat" as the panacea of all human ills, but alas! no one seemed anxious but the preacher, and no one accepted the invitation but a half-witted villager, who, from having been a "mourner" at every protracted service in the vicinity for fifteen years, had acquired the appellative distinction of Nest-egg.

The discouraged pastor, looking matters squarely

in the face, announced that the church at once would enter into a "quandary" meeting, for the purpose of finding out just where the difficulty was concealed.

"The quandary session," said the elder, "will be opened with prayer by Brother Nevervary," who, with unfailing promptitude, said a prayer which long since had become a sort of unwritten model throughout the English-speaking world. This prayer, however, had been heard too often to produce any effect, other than to elicit a few weak "amens" from half a dozen drowsy brethren, and to amuse a score of godless boys, who had learned by heart the stereotyped petition, and in a low, quizzical tone of voice, apparently dictated each sentence to the aged suppliant.

The performance, nevertheless, passed for prayer, and the meeting sat once more serenely calm. For once in his life, Elder Combustible was at sea. Usually he regulated his meetings and determined the degree of religious interest by the movements of Sister Tearful, who was famous in such affairs as "Combustible's thermometer." But now, alas! the indications were appalling. The mercury was low, Sister Tearful was dry, and Nest-egg alone sat gloomy and unmajestic in the seat of the penitents.

"Something's the matter—there's an Achan in the camp!" exclaimed the perplexed elder; "and he must drop the golden wedge and strip off the Babylonish garment before the stream of joy shall flow, and the desert blossom as the rose. Where's the hindering cause, brethren?"

This direct interrogation brought Brother Sniffles to his feet, who observed that in his opinion the meet-

ing lacked steam. "That's what's the matter," joined in Sister Periodical, excitedly. "If you want the pot to bile, you must have abundance of steam."

"The pot's got to bile afore you get the steam," observed old Brother Safety Valve, logically. "An' the pot can't bile 'cept'n it's got fire under it, an' the fire can't burn if folks stan's aroun' contin'all'y flingin' water on it."

"In my opinion," said the elder, "Brother Safety Valve has hit at the root of the matter. I fear there are ungodly members in Shouting Church, whose corrupt lives and scandalous practices are a reproach to Christianity, and for whose iniquity God withholds his Spirit." Here the preacher paused, with Valve and a few like him nodding a hearty assent, while the members generally looked woefully solemn. "Now," continued the elder, in authoritative accents, "the good of the church demands that we should take some steps to discover at whose door the sin lies. Who is the guilty party? Who hath covered Zion with shame and given offence unto Israel? Let him speak!"

Sister Tearful, to throw the cloak of zeal over her own hollow pretensions, saddled the sin on Jim Crock-er for crossing his feet while the fiddle was playing. Sister Sorrowful arraigned Nancy Dovetail for singing a reel at the last corn-shucking. 'Squire Crank-side preferred a charge against Jake Spatterboard, "'cause," said he, "Jake ha'int 'tended meetin' sense the baptizin'." Other indictments in superlative abundance were at the tongues' end of the accusers, when Elder Combustible interposed.

"You have tithed mint, anise, and cummin," said

he, caustically, "but the weightier matters of the law you have studiously neglected. I hear reports of dishonesty, profanity, drunkenness, covetousness, and lying among you; yet you have treated these things as virtues." Then, turning to a number of delinquents whose weaknesses lay in the above-mentioned specifications, his cheeks aglow with righteous indignation, he concluded, "I tell you in love, yet plainly, they that do such things shall be damned."

Stung to the quick, old Spasmodic rose, trembling, and delivered himself.

"Bretherings," said he, with decision; "this makes forty year I has been a member of the church, an' as fur as I 'members, I never has knowed a 'ligious intrust to be started by discussin' sich p'int's as temper'nce an' honesty; an' furderno', if you interduce 'em here, it will invariable fling coolness on the meetin'. An' mo'n that, here an' thar, I moves unanimous that we invite Parson Smoke, the evangelist, who leaves these minor p'int's in the background an' preaches erbout great matters like hebenly rest an' rickognition, to come an' 'spoun' the gawspel fur er few days, beginnin' with termorrow. What we wants is fire, says I!"

The venerable Spasmodic took his seat, the motion was carried as by a whirlwind, and the quandary meeting closed, the disciples of fuss crying, "Fire! fire! fire!"

Sure enough, next morning at eleven o'clock Parson Smoke appeared on the ground, creating no little sensation among professors, and arousing dubious conjectures among the ungodly. His reputation hav-

ing preceded him, some of his admirers stood on the church steps recounting his labors and marvelous successes.

"Yes," chimed in Spasmodic, "I 'tended er 'vival he hilt at Coonskin Church, an', if I'm livin', he nat'ally raked 'em in by scores an' forties. Everything was er blazin' at ole Coonskin fur onct, an' some un 'em said how it was as glorious er meetin' as the apostle ministers hilt in days past an' gone. He'll tech er match to the tinder an' have these good ole sisters er hollerin' an' er weepin' afore this time termorrow. If he don't I hain't no prophet, I hain't."

"Nur is me," sniffled Sniffles, indorsing what had been said, and about to deliver himself further, when the choir, in notes of thunder, announced the hour of worship.

"The first thing to do," whispered the evangelist to Combustible, as they walked up the aisle, "is to stir up the brethren, for I can sway no power over sinners so long as the Lord's people are cold and indifferent. Now point out to me the most impulsive, emotional sister in the congregation—one who, under the strong influences of the Spirit, wouldn't mind giving audible expression to her inward peace."

"We have quite a number who can fill that bill, but you will find Sister Tearful an unfailing witness to the truth, as also is Sister Periodical, if the mood strikes her. The latter, however, is the more boisterous in the manifestation of her joy."

"She's a daisy," whispered Smoke, entering the pulpit and announcing to the choir "The Old Ship of Zion."

The evangelist preached briefly and impressively of the wonders he had seen and done, and portrayed touchingly the death-beds of sainted little girls, who had caught glimpses of the angels and had gone to heaven on shining wings. He then described minutely the meeting of the saints in the world above, picturing vividly husbands and wives rushing together in sacred squeeze, children running a race to embrace first a departed mother, and all the hosts of light warbling one eternal song as the chief end of the heavenly life and the goal of celestial activity. In spite of the evangelist's description, I always have thought I would like to go to heaven.

"Now," finally said the gifted speaker, "I want all Christians to come forward and shake hands with me, while the choir sings 'Children of the Heavenly King.'" A numerous throng showed their appreciation of the privilege, patrolling the aisle in unmistakable ecstasies, shaking not only the preacher's hand, but that of everybody else they could reach. This was Smoke's plan of "getting up steam," and it proved eminently successful. Indeed, all hands were steaming, and not a few were about to boil over. Spasmodic was simmering.

Turning suddenly and vehemently toward the unconverted, the accomplished exhorter next displayed his wonderful powers of persuasion.

"Let every sinner in the house," said he, "who desires to go to heaven, arise and come to these anxious seats for mercy and life, while the brethren sing an appropriate hymn. Sing, brethren."

Nest-egg, solemn and alone, promptly obeyed.

"Thank the Lord!" shouted the overjoyed evangelist; "thank the Lord! Now, if for any cause you do not see fit to come to the mourners' bench, please hold up your right hand, and that will do as well." Not a soul stirred. "I shall now vary the invitation a little. Let every unconverted person in the house who desires to flee from the wrath to come, stand up." A little tallow-faced girl stood up. "Glory!" screamed Smoke, in an eruption of ecstasies. "Now, if any one is interested about his soul, please raise the right hand." No response. "Then, the left." Still no response. "Now I make this request: All who want the Christians present to pray for them, will please kneel down." Every knee was rigid. "Then nod your head—then crook your finger—then wink one eye—then poke out your tongue."

But sinners were obdurate. The earnest man, however, had the burden of souls on him, and made a last strong appeal. "If any one here, man, woman, or child, male or female," said he, "wishes to escape the terrors of the bottomless pit and start to-day for glory and the New Jerusalem, let him blow his nose."

Not a nasal organ performed the desired function. The parson had labored so far in vain, but his resources, as we shall see, were not yet exhausted. An hour's recess being given for dinner, the congregation left the sanctuary, discussing the versatile preacher, his wonderful sermon, and his powerful appeals.

During dinner hour, I left Jack Cheesequakes and Nancy Dovetail in charge of a huge watermelon, and, in the blissful company of Widow Campbell's angelic daughter sauntered down to the spring. Polytechnic

for once was grave; usually she was as mirthful as a lark. Her very smile was sad; still, for the life of me, I couldn't help feeling like eating her up. But I didn't do it.

We returned in silence to the church—silence I say, because my fair companion was too embarrassed to speak, and I was too sheepish to venture an angle of vision beyond my big toes, realizing that Polytechnic now understood the secret workings of my mind, and had the advantage of me. Besides, how did I know I would ever get such a chance again? The blackness of darkness!

The great congregation was once more seated, and the usual preliminaries were over, when the versatile gentleman in cloth requested all professing Christians present to bow at their seats and sing on their knees. This was a novel feature in protracted meetings, but it took like wildfire among the simple folk of Shouting Church. Of course all knelt; that is, all came as near it as possible, for Sister Periodical, besides having eaten rather heartily, was of a rotund shape unsuited to the kneeling posture, and sat flat on the floor. Nest-egg rested on his stomach. Not a few squatted. It was indeed altogether a most interesting and picturesque scene, though some people were so eccentric as to say they saw no connection between such things and religion.

"Arise!" cried Smoke, "and testify!" Then, approaching the periodic disciple, he whispered, "We expect to hear from you immediately, sister. The success of the meeting depends upon you. Give a lusty shout for the Lord."



"WE EXPECT TO HEAR FROM YOU IMMEDIATELY, SISTER. . . . GIVE A LUSTY SHOUT FOR
THE LORD."

And she gave it. Pointing her huge fists toward the stars, and developing a blissful smile, the proportions of which I hesitate to calculate without the help of the logarithmic table, she broke loose most zealously. Then followed in quick succession those tried and faithful worthies, Sisters Tearful and Sorrowful. Brother Sniffles, determined not to be outdone, shoved off himself, clapping his hands at a furious rate, accompanied by Crankside, Spasmodic, and a host of old heroes, whose zeal was to knowledge as infinity to zero.

Nest-egg himself became unusually anxious, weeping and writhing on his seat, observing which, some of the boys declared he was "pipped." But when the long and patient seeker arose and delivered his testimony in deafening tones of exultation, a dozen voices cried simultaneously, "Nest-egg's hatched at last!" Some asked whether it was a rooster or a pullet, while others declared it to be a goose. This was the first profession of the meeting.

Resolved to make the most of the occasion, the delighted Smoke sent the jubilant shouters among the pews as heralds of mercy, stirring up things as they went. They led mourners by the score to the anxious seat. Polytechnic went up in custody of Sister Sorrowful, seeing which, my pulse quickened, and I came near going up myself. The mourners' benches were becoming rapidly popular, and matters were moving on briskly. About six "came through" a minute. As they "perfessed," to use Sister Periodical's language, they arose limberly from their seats and then, clapping their hands, wiping their eyes, smiling, laughing, cry-

ing, shouting, they rushed frantically down the aisle to some unconverted relative or friend, either kneeling and imploring them to go forward, or hugging them most emphatically.

Stirring times, those! Indeed the penitents began to profess so rapidly, that pop-corn in a skillet over a bed of coals, was, in comparison, a tame performance. At length, as beautiful as a new-born rose and as graceful as a comet, Polytechnic professed, and started for me. "The Campbells are coming," said I; and by my side sat the darling girl. I could have stayed there a week.

"Won't you go forward, Red?" she pleaded, but the mystery being not altogether satisfactory, I replied, "I'm a-thinkin', Polytechnic."

"But," said the bewitching creature, "won't you do it for my sake?"

"What? Polytechnic, for your sake? Why, I'd wade through millstones and mud-puddles for you."

So I rose and went in haste. True, I had no religious seriousness whatever, and by no means intended to play the hypocrite, but as for resisting Miss Campbell just at this juncture, it was simply an impossibility.

The evangelist announced, as soon as he could command silence to be heard, that he did not intend to dismiss the congregation until every sinner in the house came forward for prayer. He accordingly started twenty-seven brethren to praying at the same time, each striving to pitch his petition in a louder key than the others in order to be heard. This, in turn, put in motion about forty sisters, who shouted with such suc-

cess that Smoke announced, with something of vehemence, that the New Jerusalem had come down from on high. It was the liveliest time I ever witnessed. Some of the mourners professed two and three times, while Sister Periodical became so zealous that she had to be fenced off in a corner to herself. Spasmodic straddled the pulpit, clapped his hands, and began to sing:

“O! come, and won’t you go?”

Matters were now ripe for Smoke to make the home stretch. Seizing a chair from the stand, and engaging the services of two husky officials, he commanded them to go into the highways and hedges and compel the ungodly to come in. “This,” said he, “is the gospel chair; blessed is he that rideth therein.” The obedient porters took the “gospel chair” and brought in it penitents as fast as they could. Up rode Jack Cheesequakes, in a broad grin; then came Toothpick Wheazles, alighting from the chair and taking a seat by me. The very sight of him brought to my mind the spelling match, and prompted the unfair inquiry, “Which is worse in a fellow’s eye, gnats or Smoke?”

But the evening was growing late, and the “gospel chair,” though effective in its way, proved too slow a process. Therefore the preacher provided a more expeditious method. Marshaling a force of six muscular brethren and pointing to a crude bench back of the pulpit, he gravely said, “This is the sacred couch; go, gather up all the ends of the earth and fetch them hither.” Off they went to the rear of the church, and captured six at a time, bringing them forward and un-

loading them with proper celerity. All the while the saints were shouting, the penitents professing, and the preacher exhorting.

Nearly all the mourners had now professed, and were inexpressibly happy. Even Toothpick had become a disciple. Only a few "reprobates"—as Smoke expressed it—were left. Of course, all the children and young girls had "come through" without a jar; and there being no further material to work upon, the faithful herald resolved to close the meeting, stating that there had been a hundred and forty-nine precious souls hopefully converted. Then, opening his valise and selling a number of his little books, he took up a collection and left for Popcorn Valley, the next field of his labors.

I DO SOME COURTING

Chapter IX.

TOOTHPICK WHEAZLES of late had been visiting Mrs. Campbell's with a frequency that had become somewhat—well, I don't mean exactly dangerous, but perhaps a little alarming and considerably irritating; not because I was at all jealous, but because I looked upon the matter from the viewpoint of a philosopher, and such proceedings naturally made me feel intolerably lonesome.

I discovered also that my general health was queerly affected. Of course I was not the least jealous, only I lost flesh at the rate of two pennyweights a minute. My whole body seemed to be shrinking by some strange mathematical law, yet I was not jealous. Most people would have been. Nothing about my eyes was visible but the iris; my skin was not only dry and parched, but green and yellow in streaks; my jaw-bones at times became incapable of action; my tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth; my pulse beat feebly about once every two hours; my cheeks were pallid; my ears flopped; my underlip dropped; and my backbone curved to such an extent that as I walked my fingers dragged upon the ground. At least, you would have imagined this about to happen to have seen me. The world seemed to be a mass of indigo cinders un-

der my feet, but I was not jealous. I was indeed a pitiable phantom. Sleep fled from my eyes and hope fled from my heart; love bled and ambition died. The village undertaker passed me and smiled.

What a depressing effect incongruities have on a well-balanced mind! Nothing but total freedom from jealousy, and the exercise of a resolute philosophy, saved me from complete wreck and a speedy demise. My precarious state was greatly aggravated by the favorable impression my rival was making in certain directions at Coon Hollow, by reason of his great possessions. Widow Campbell, in the meantime (and widows with pretty daughters occasionally will fall heir to such infirmities), was no little infatuated by Wheazles's saw-mills and big talk; and it became nauseously evident to me that my opponent was growing daily in the esteem of the head member of the Campbell firm. Still, I was not jealous.

Suspense is painful; and the next thing I knew. Bucephalus was tied up at Coon Hollow, and his master sat in Widow Campbell's parlor.

"I wish to see Miss Polytechnic Campbell," I had said, meekly, to a slim maid that answered my knock.

After a bit, gentle feet came tap-tapping down the steps, warning me that the crisis was at hand. Miss Campbell entered, greeting me with the sweetest smile I had ever beheld. I rose to meet her, and pressed that fair, precious, darling, little hand for about a minute, intending to seat myself beside her on the divan before relaxing my grasp. But the bewitching girl was attired so far beyond anything I had anticipated, that my heart sank within me, and I retreated to one corner

of the room, while Polytechnic occupied another. She seemed to swim in waves of "illusion"—that's what it's called, I think—while her golden ringlets, sporting in blue and scarlet ribbons, fell luxuriantly upon her dimpled shoulders. Her eyes were unusually soft and radiant, and her cheeks were deeply crimsoned in testimony of her evident embarrassment. I never knew how much I adored her until that hour.

But, thought I, as I gazed at my dingy breeches, patched shoes, and rusty old coat (that my grandfather had been married in, and which came nearly down to my ankles) it would be solemn mockery to sit beside such a creature, much more to ask her hand. Shuddering at my boldness, ashamed of my impertinence, realizing my danger, and beginning to choke, I started to get behind the screen; but concluding that it was wiser to make an attack than to suffer myself to be treed, I resolved to try my fortune. So I said nothing for fifteen doleful minutes.

At the end of that time, moved by an irresistible impulse, I marched across the parlor and sat down as near Polytechnic as possible. For another solemn fifteen minutes I was as silent as an Egyptian mummy. Finally I summoned sufficient courage to cross my legs, but spake not. I fingered at my coat-tail in the fond hope that I might recall the speech I had prepared, but no speech came. I put my hands in my pockets, cleared my throat, took out my handkerchief, and wiped my nose; but my speech was irretrievably gone.

"Polytechnic," said I, at length, resolving to risk an extempore address, "I have come to—"

Ah me! I was just getting off when a sudden, quick tap at the front door interrupted the flow of my love and language. Widow Campbell was in the kitchen, making cake for Sunday, so I thought it devolved upon me to answer the knock. I plunged fiercely toward the door, and lo, and behold! it was Toothpick Wheazles.

"I wish to see Miss Polytechnic Campbell privately a few moments," said he, grumly.

"I have already," said I, with a sweet smile, "engaged Miss Campbell's company and the parlor for a fortnight. If you desire to see the widow, you can walk 'round to the kitchen and amuse yourself superintending pots and kindling fires with lumber from your saw-mills."

Pale with rage, the youth departed, with vengeance in his heart. Poor fellow! Nemesis must have her way, and it was his turn to pine.

Again I sat beside that seraphic form, and attempted to tell the tale of my love.

"Sweetest sweetness," whispered I, with the softness of a frosted persimmon, "I have come to—"

Here the slim maid approached the door with glasses of water, but seeing the menacing shake of my fist, she darted through the passage, falling and breaking the glasses with a tremendous squall and crash. This catastrophe, of course, brought Mrs. Campbell into the parlor to see what was the matter. And there I sat beside Polytechnic, my face as red as a beet and my heart throbbing like a steam engine, while the poor, patient girl—girls are generally patient when they are about to be courted—bore it with fortitude.

When solitude and silence had calmed again my troubled sea, I launched my bark on placid waters and hoisted my canvas to catch the zephyrs of propitious love. Gazing dreamily into the heavenly azure of Polytechnic's eyes, inhaling the exhilarating odors of acacia, Jockey Club and violets that floated on the air as she shook her handkerchief carelessly, I took up the burden of my mission.

"Sweetest sugar," I said, with dripping softness, "I have come to—"

Unspeakable horrors! a rap like a peal of thunder announced a visitor at the front door. This time it was Hydrogen Mush, who had come in haste to notify Mrs. Campbell that her pigs were in his turnip patch. Judging that a pig excitement just at that juncture would prove a misfortune beyond repair, I insisted on the 'Squire coming in, that there was about to be a funeral, and he would be needed as a pallbearer. Hydrogen retreated, as any man would do attired in his shirt-sleeves in time of obsequies, and, I presume, attended to the pigs alone.

A fourth time I settled down to the hazardous task of courting. My affections again began to glow like a spark from Vesuvius, while my tongue was preparing to utter unutterable things. Crimson beauty sported on Polytechnic's cheeks, celestial radiance broke from her eyes as from a cataract of suns, and angelic sweetness robed her as with a garment.

"Celestial peach," I asseverated, in low accents, "I have come to—"

Ah! fortune seemed to have sprung a leak; for a syndicate of female voices in the kitchen screamed,



“SWEETEST SUGAR,” I SAID WITH DRIPPING SOFTNESS, “I HAVE COME TO——”

"Fire! fire!" which so startled my shattered nerves that I leaped from the divan and butted my head against the low ceiling with disastrous effect. Finally, however, rallying from my bewilderment, I rushed headlong into the culinary department, to behold a prostrate stove-pipe unjointed, and the air filled with smoke and cinders. The pipe was soon righted, and matters were once more quiet. Surely the poet had me in his mind's eye when he wrote that true but sickening line:

The course of true love never did run smooth.

I think this misfortune is due mainly to female maidens. But any way, I sat me again on that same divan, by the side of that same bewitching girl. Again the thoughts came, and the thought went, and the love burned.

"Distilled honey," whispered I, dreamily, "I have come to —"

"Ouch!" I cried, and Polytechnic jumped. An uncivilized wasp had, with malice aforethought, invaded my trousers, and was engaged in a most telling warfare on my leg. I yelped; I bent double; I squeezed my limb where the battle was raging most keenly, trying in vain to crush my foe, but the barbarian, like a certain noted ghost, would not down. Then I made a stupendous effort to sit on him, but sat on his sting—and felt hurt.

By this time Polytechnic had come bravely to my assistance. Armed with a broomstick, she stood over me striking the place where I indicated the presence

of the wasp, but this heroic treatment failing, she seized the tongs from the hearth, and—pinched my already sore flesh in a last attempt to stay the fearful havoc the insect was making. I groaned under the hand I loved. At length, however, she secured the wasp in the tongs, and thus removed the last obstacle from the rough path of courtship. It seemed for a while that I would never rally, and that the avowal of my affection would have to be indefinitely postponed. I sat beside her. The accidents appeared to be over; there was peace.

My recent experiences had exhausted me so I fell asleep. I awoke. She was gone. I ran to the door and jerked the bell. The servant came.

"I want to see Miss Campbell," said I.

"She'll come as soon as she gets through laughing," said she. "Take a seat in the parlor."

Polytechnic came. I sat beside her.

"Oozing syrup," said I, "I have come to [no calamity this time] say I love you." Taking her snowy hand in mine, I asked, "Would you be sorry if I were dead?"

She answered by tears that began to well in her deep blue eyes.

"Incarnate perfection," I said, mellifluously, "you are the light of my life, the joy of my soul, the mel-lowest nectarine in the garden of my affections, and the brightest star in the sky of my hopes. I have come to ask you to be my wife. I possess no saw-mills, but I do own a family tree. I am descended from King Alfred of England, although my father is a farmer, poor and plain. I own nothing but a little mule and a

big heart, and it is my grief that I have not the gold of Ophir and the cedars of Lebanon to lay at your feet. It would be my supreme joy to consecrate myself and mule to your service, and to write our names together on the sands of Possum Creek. Cherubic duck, can you smile on a worm? Can you look with compassion on dust and ashes? Will you suffer a dog to walk in the light of your countenance and die in the shadow of your smile?"

"Red," ejaculated the bewitching, blushing girl, "this is so sudden. I cannot return a positive answer until I speak with mother. You will have to ask ma, Red."

"Goodness gracious!" cried I, in an agony of astonishment; but off the darling creature ran.

A variety of emotions flitted through my disordered soul as I awaited the dread approach of Mrs. Campbell. I am sure I had found difficulty enough in disclosing my heart to the daughter, but to go over the matter to the mother in cold blood, without the inspiration of loving eyes and the pressure of soft hands, was an outrage upon all the metaphysics of my nature. After some minutes—though it seemed to me to be only seconds—Mrs. Campbell entered, with a plate of cakes, ten of which I demolished in an attempt to collect my thoughts. There was just one solitary little cake left when Mrs. Campbell opened fire with her batteries upon me.

"Mr. Beans," she said, in a calm, motherly, lie-not-to-me-sir sort of voice; "my daughter informs me that you have requested her hand in marriage. Now, as Polytechnic's mother, it is my privilege and duty to

inquire as to your ability to maintain a wife, and the amount of your income. These matters are very important in contracting marriage, and hence I ask candidly, sir, are you able to support a family?"

"Ma—am?" gasped I, realizing for the first time the solemnity of courting a girl. But oddly enough Fortune came to my aid and Mrs. Campbell, being a little deaf, understood me to answer in the affirmative. But luck was always mine.

"I am pleased," she continued, "to learn you have some means, Mr. Beans, since a poor man could not possibly meet the exigencies of the case. I am getting old, as you see, and several of my daughters never will marry, so of course, we shall expect to live with Polytechnic."

For the space of two minutes I spoke not. I thought of my poor little mule; I thought of the barren hills at Shakerag; I thought of a robust widow and five husky, don't-need-any-medicine-to-day-thank-you girls to be fed by the strength of my arm; and—I thought—for once in my life—seriously of saw-mills.

"Madam," mumbled I, at length, the prospect rising gloomily before me; "'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'"

Mrs. Campbell, mistaking the force of my borrowed words, and judging me to be exceeding pious because of my ready use of Scripture, left the parlor elated at the idea of being elevated to the position of mother-in-law.

"Mr. Beans," she said as she retired, "Polytechnic has my full consent to act as her heart dictates in this matter. And I assure you I know of no young

gentleman into whose hands I would rather trust my daughter than you."

I was just about, in my fit of exultation, to start up a psalm, when again the happy, blushing girl sat by my side.

"Polytechnic," said I, in wooing accents, "your mother said she would trust you in my hands; and as you are an obedient child, you must do her will."

And into my hands she came. Verily, nothing is more handy than a lovesick girl.

"Tell me, Polytechnic," said I, gently drawing her closer to my side, "do you love me, 'ittle boo'ful dove?"

"Oh! Heredity, you know I do," whispered the innocent, artless girl, burying her face in my necktie.

This was too much for me. I clapped my hands; I squealed; I cried; I laughed; I hugged the center-table; I straddled the piano-stool and turned round; and not knowing what to do next, I sealed the engagement with the lover's seal, and hastened to Bucephalus. The night had grown late when life's problem at last was solved. Engaged! Whoop! Polytechnic loved me! Toothpick was beaten! Glory! I got happier and happier. How large I was! How small all others!

Ecstasies kept accumulating. I thought I would burst. I tied the halter around my waist to prevent an explosion. I struck spurs to my animal, and in a moment reached the outer gate. Leaping from my saddle upon the gatepost, I flapped my arms and crowed. This started all the gobblers and roosters in the neighborhood to gobbling and crowing. "Fellow-partners of my joy, thank you!" said I. I remounted

my mule; and as I looked toward the heavens above, I thought the stars were never so fair, and went home singing:

"There's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream."

And there isn't.

AT SHEEPSKIN COLLEGE

Chapter X.

The melancholy days had come, the saddest of the year,
Of scanning odes and proving sums so long and dark and queer.

My college career was at hand. It was a sad strain upon my ripening affections to leave for six or eight long months the beautiful Polytechnic. But my father comforted me by the assurance that, if I studied hard, I would win about forty prizes and secure a harvest of sheepskins, which would bring me into such renown that I speedily could procure such a situation as would enable me to support a wife handsomely. Under the influence of such a pleasing possibility, I consented to forego all the joys of my boyhood and solemnly consecrate myself to learning.

I arrived at Sheepskin College without event, reported myself to the president, Doctor Jonathan Cyclops, and set to work grubbing among Greek, Latin, and mathematical roots—and occasionally, with proper company, among a more interesting class of roots, known in college and common phraseology as sweet potatoes. This difficult branch of the curriculum was always prosecuted in the night, and conducted by a professor elected by the students. Very often I filled the chair—or rather the basket—myself. Under ordinary circumstances, such procedure justly might be

denominated theft, but at Sheepskin College it could receive no harder name than necessary spoliation. This statement will be justified by reference to the following recipe, found tacked inside the kitchen door:

SOUP A LA MODE.

One barrel dishwater, three cakes tallow, two ox ribs, nineteen grains rice, three turnips, four Irish potatoes, one dozen pods bull pepper, one bag sage, half peck salt, one bushel onions, couple well-used dish rags, three deceased flies. Cook two days, and serve at temperature 39° F. with pewter spoons.

But there is something worse than soup for a school-boy—for instance, a professor's daughter just blooming into innocent pertness. It may seem a little odd that in treating of Sheepskin College I should discuss a professor's daughter, but, it must be remembered that I am not acting the part of a novelist, nor writing as a philosopher, but simply chronicling such facts as entered into my own experience or especially attracted my attention. One morning a servant tapped at my dormitory with a note, which read as follows:

Dr. Cyclops will be pleased to have Mr. Beans take tea with him this evening at nine o'clock.

Tea! why, I didn't drink tea; and I never went to tea anywhere in my life. I did not know what it was to "take tea," but supposed it meant a sort of party, with oceans of that fluid. So I responded with becoming gravity:

Dr. Cyclops shall have the pleasure he anticipates; and Mr. Beans will dine with him at tea.

Just how I happened to receive such signal honor is explained by an error that had crept into the papers. My grandmother died and left me \$7.50, which the

printer made \$75,000. So, it being heralded abroad that I had fallen heir to a fortune, I became a person of some note, even in literary circles. This erroneous impression unfortunately was deepened by the fact that I kept Bucephalus at college to ride and drive on holidays, making him pay his board by hiring him out at other times. But the display of seeming wealth was wholly unintentional. The president, Dr. Cyclops, was poor; his daughter was pretty; I had a supposed fortune; hence came the invitation.

Imagine a poor, unlettered boy from Shakerag taking tea with the president of a great college! A man who had a dictionary on his tongue, a couple of encyclopædias in his head, and who could repeat poetry by the hour, besides many other things at the bare mention of which I almost went into spasms! But I found myself, however, just as the college clock struck three, climbing the Doctor's front steps.

I saw, as I drew up opposite the door, a polished bronze knob over which was printed, "Pull." I pulled. Something seemed to give way; wires rattled, things jingled, echoes seemed to be wrestling together in the basement. I never had such an experience before. I imagined I had pulled the spigot out of a volcano and had brought speedy ruin on the professor's house. Like a flash of lightning I leaped over the front gate and was making such good running time that my coat-tail changed the perpendicular for the horizontal direction, when a soft feminine voice called out, "We're at home, Mr. Beans; come in."

I returned in fear and trembling, shook hands with Finikie, the president's daughter, a handsome girl of



"I IMAGINED I HAD PULLED THE SPIGOT OUT OF A VOLCANO."

just sweet sixteen, and inquired mildly if any damage had been done, and what would be the cost of repairs. Finikie assured me no harm had befallen; it was just the way the door-bell had of doing; and after she had showed me the whole arrangement, my alarm was assuaged. There were no door-bells where I came from, like that.

Finikie expressed some surprise at my coming so early in the evening, apologizing for the absence of flowers in the vases. I comforted her by saying one pink was sufficient for a parlor. She received the compliment gracefully, and glancing at the clock, inquired with some embarrassment: "Mr. Beans, you said in your note of acceptance that you would dine with us at tea and we thought perhaps you intended to give us the pleasure of your company both at dinner and at tea. Have you been to dinner?"

"Oh! Miss Finikie," said I, clearing my throat in order to give my collapsed brain time to right itself, never having thought that "dine" meant anything else than eat. "You are so refined, immaterial, spiritual, that you could not detect that half-fledged *bon mot* which coupled dinner and tea, intimating the double enjoyment I anticipated."

Finikie confessed her dullness, and, after asking pardon, suggested that it was a beautiful evening for a drive to the college park. Of course, Bucephalus was ordered at once and soon stood at the Doctor's gate awaiting his precious cargo.

With a gay laugh and a flourish of ribbons, Finikie leaped into the buggy, seized the reins, and became undisputed mistress of ceremonies. The lane echoed

with peals of merriment and hilarious shouting, while Finikie jerked and lashed Bucephalus. I am sure I said nothing funny, and yet Finikie roared and screamed; and the more silent I grew, the more wildly hysterical Finikie became. Poor creature, like a torrent rushing on, she continued to raise her voice to higher and yet higher notes, finally shrieking at such a lofty and dangerous height that I feared some serious accident would befall her lungs. Bucephalus, unused to such unearthly sounds, ventured soberly to look back to investigate the matter; and, discovering Finikie's tangled hair, beribboned head, and brow shrouded in bangs, took fright, depositing the president's daughter in a brier-patch and lodging me on a fence-rail to witness his speed through an adjoining field. But who could blame the mule?

After this came frequent invitations to the president's house; daily came bouquets from the president's daughter. In accepting both invitations and bouquets, I had no idea of encouraging false hopes, nor any design of becoming an actor in a ridiculous farce. But Finikie fell in love with me, without my knowledge or consent, and misinterpreted my social visits as sure-enough courtship. I was simply homesick and love-sick, and glad of any opportunity to practice nonsense with a rattling girl whom I knew already to be engaged.

When, however, I saw a certain fellow moping about college pale and ghostly, I might have divined, had I been of a suspicious temperament, that the gossip had felt the force of a feminine foot. But a blind man sees nothing; hence, I did not see the potent af-

finitude between a reputed \$75,000 man and an \$1,100 girl. Before that unhappy rag of a paper blundered into the grotesque mistake respecting my grandmother's bequest, the president knew me only at a distance; now he invited me to his home. Finikie had turned up her nose at me a time or two, and refused to go with me to a funeral; but now she smiled on me across the cemetery, and proposed on one occasion to go with me to a hanging. This wondrous metamorphosis in behavior I thought, at the time, was due to the family having gotten religion, or to the publication in the "Literary Comet," the college paper, of the following poem on the death of old Dix, the college sexton. Incidentally the poem rounded up thirteen prizes for me at Commencement:

IN MEMORIAM.

Dirge.

7 & 7,

Earth and heaven;

9 & 1,

It's just begun;

2 & 10,

Then comes the end;

6 & 4,

Forever more

Across the Styx

Is fled old Dix.

Requiem.

Now students all, with one accord,

Lament for poor old Dix;

Consign his ashes to the sward,

And row him o'er the Styx.

I found later, however, that their marvelous courtesies were due to the impression that I was the lucky

heir to a bit of lucre. Oh! no wonder the poet, in the climax of his loftiest apostrophe, exclaimed,

Oh! thou potent Dollar,
Thou irresistible Tin!

So a roseate scheme was laid by the Cyclopes for my speedy marriage with Finikie, of which I was kept in profound ignorance. I loved Polytechnic Campbell, and it seemed a compound, double-distilled impertinence for anybody to suspect otherwise; yet my country raising forbade my viewing events and signs with any other than an unsophisticated eye. The cake, ice cream, and flowers that made their way to my study daily, and often semi-daily, I interpreted as neighborly acts and tokens of friendship; yet I never dreamed of addressing love to Miss Cyclops, nor did I opine that Finikie's affections were awakened toward me.

Even had not my devotions already been disposed of, it would have appeared sinful for a poor, untutored, backwoods lad to aspire to nuptial relations with the cultured and aristocratic daughter of a college president. In unfeigned gratitude to this kind family, I expressed freely my sense of appreciation, asseverating with considerable emotion that I loved Dr. Cyclops, his wife, and daughter, and that I looked upon the Doctor as a father, and Mrs. Cyclops as a mother. Most unhappily, Finikie seized upon this avowal as a declaration of love, and so reported to her parents, giving rise to a visitation from President Cyclops.

It was four o'clock, as I sat in my study giving the finishing touch to the peroration of a twenty-seven page (foolscap) letter to Polytechnic, when a stately knock at the door announced the venerable Doctor.

"Why, Doctor," said I, in some surprise, "is it you? Glad to see you, sir! Have a seat," enjoined I, pointing to a three-legged stool, while I myself located on the pictured end of a soap-box.

"What have you been doing, my boy?" familiarly inquired my distinguished visitor.

"Oh! nothing; just closing up a small volume on love," answered I, with a candid smile.

"Ho! yi!" exclaimed my honored guest. "You votaries of Cupid are all alike; you write as the amorous muse dictates."

"Yes, Doctor; there's an a-musing element in us all," replied I, with an attempt at facetiousness.

"True, Heredity; and my present a-muse-ment proves your proposition. Ahem—this bit of pleasantry introduces the object of my visit. My daughter informs me that you have made a declaration of love to her, and at the start I wish to know whether the matter is fully understood by both parties."

"Certainly, Doctor; I love your daughter, yourself, and wife. You have all been so kind to me that I would be the veriest ingrate, if I loved you not. I have frequently so expressed myself to my classmates."

"It is then your full intention to marry, if I understand you aright?"

"Most assuredly, Doctor; otherwise I would not be engaged," said I, with a large degree of enthusiasm, as I thought of the subangel I had left behind.

"It is well, my boy; I'm glad you consider it an engagement. I rejoice greatly. When do you expect to marry, Heredity?"

"Whenever her mother is willing," I replied, color-

ing a bit, "and I can get financial matters in shape, I suppose."

"I'm sure, Heredity, her mother will not object to any time you propose, nor will her father," said the president, with a smile, patting me on the shoulder.

"She has no father," exclaimed I, in astonishment.

The Doctor stretched his eyes, wiped his eye-glasses, and, suddenly imagining he saw into the bottom of things, observed: "I see, you scamp; you have appropriated me wholly to yourself. But I'll be father to both of you, anyway."

"Oh! thank you, *mon pere*," I said, utilizing a little French I had learned the day before, whereupon the good Doctor chuckled a cheerful farewell to me.

As I sat by my opened window one sultry night not long afterwards, pondering where I could borrow thirty-five cents to pay my laundress, whose tender pleas awakened my sympathies, I heard animated voices on the Cyclops front porch, discussing a matter that seemed to be of general interest to the family.

"He's a grand catch," said the president. "It's a brilliant affair indeed!"

MRS. CYCLOPS: Yes; but he's so very odd, so grotesquely eccentric, you know.

DR. CYCLOPS: But *so* rich, my dear.

MRS. CYCLOPS (*resignedly*): Truly, the only redeeming feature; yet, I suppose, that will compensate.

DR. CYCLOPS: Even so, dear; splendid catch, I say.

MRS. CYCLOPS: And yet, what a pity he is so very queer. Just think, darling, of our polished Finikie, the belle of the college, and who would be a belle anywhere, wedding a country boor!

DR. CYCLOPS (*insinuatingly*): But—\$75,000, wife!

MRS. CYCLOPS: Of course, dear, circumstances do alter cases; and \$75,000, which is a prize inestimable to a poor professor's daughter, will change a country prig into a rustic prince. I must confess, Doctor, I am simply charmed at Finikie's good fortune.

FINIKIE (*overhearing the conversation and rushing on the porch*): Why, ma, all the students consider him a superb wit, and even the faculty admit that he is the poetic genius of college.

DR. CYCLOPS: Yes; and the \$75,000, you know.

MRS. CYCLOPS: Ah! yes.

DR. CYCLOPS: By the way, little wife, do you know that I have concocted a small scheme?

MRS. CYCLOPS (*with alarm*): Oh! dear. You have concocted so many schemes that proved valuable only for the genius displayed in their concoction, that I have despaired of valuable results. You know, Doctor, you thought your novel would bring you a fortune, but somehow publishers didn't take to it. Then you invented a phonetic alphabet, which you fancied princes and kings would adopt throughout the world, but the expense of getting it out nearly ruined us.

DR. CYCLOPS: But I've hit rock bottom now; something tangible, solid, sure.

MRS. CYCLOPS (*her face brightening up*): What now, Mr. Cyclops?

DR. CYCLOPS (*adjusting his spectacles and looking toward the sky*): Why, we'll all go over to Europe next summer, as a grand bridal party. Just think of it! Our long-cherished dreams realized at last! We'll spend the months among Mediterranean zephyrs, on

Alpine heights, by the springs of Baden-Baden; and pass jocund hours in the great capitals of Europe.

MRS. CYCLOPS (*practically*): But what about the money?

DR. CYCLOPS: Well, by the by, I forgot to say we have \$75,000 backing us. You see, to get into such a family as the Cyclopes will cost a youngster something. A man who wouldn't exchange a bit of sordid gold for such social standing would be a sorry dog indeed. The hand of Finikie Cyclops is worth millions! Did I say millions? I meant billions! Of course, he'll have to lay down a round ten thousand for our outfit, fare, pocket money, and that sort of thing. Yes, dear; I expect to bring back five hundred dollars' worth of novelties, to say nothing of a span of Arabian horses and a Paris barouche. How does it strike you now, dumpling?

MRS. CYCLOPS (*completely won*): There's celestial grandeur about it. Perfectly superb! How I'll haunt Parisian jewelry stores, and spend tireless hours at the shops! By the way, Dr. Cyclops, it would be a choice opportunity for you to get a new wig.

Dr. Cyclops seemed suddenly to remember that he had important business awaiting him, and retired with a sigh. Thus closed a conversation which I heard with no special interest other than that I was glad to know that the president had met with some good luck somewhere. To this matter I shall have occasion to revert in the next chapter.

Chapter XI.

I WAS fully clad in parchment at Commencement. The very generous faculty of Sheepskin College gave diplomas for pretty nearly everything under the sun—good, bad, and indifferent. If a pupil had a good record he carted away enough sheepskin to make him a suit of clothes and a spare coat and vest. If his record were only an average one he had at least a suit and even if he were only a poor hand at knowledge he got enough to make a pair of overalls. And with the gaudy ribbons and the big blob of sealing-wax that went with every diploma graduates of Doctor Cyclops' education factory were sights to behold when they left the institution.

So, on Commencement Day, I both looked and felt sheepish—sheepskin under both arms, sheepskin in both hands, sheepskin in the top of my hat, sheepskin stuffed in my bootlegs, and sheepskin rammed into my breeches. It was one of the big days of my life. Immensely proud of my learning, I happily conceived the magnificent idea of writing a work of at least five thousand volumes, each volume to contain about seven thousand pages, the size of a washboard, with a title-page that would read something like this:

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE

EMBRACING ALL THAT IS KNOWN
IN THE HEAVENS ABOVE, OR
IN THE EARTH BENEATH,
OR IN THE WATERS
UNDER THE
EARTH

BY
RED BEANS
Artium Magister

SHAKERAG, NEAR TOADVILE, PLANET EARTH
WE, US & COMPANY
THE MOON, THE SOLAR SYSTEM, THE UNIVERSE
ALL THE TIME

That's about all I ever wrote of it. Numerous engagements prevented its completion, and besides, I got the toothache whenever I began work on it.

From College Hall, I went to my room, filled with bright dreams, crowned with glory, and laden with hides. I sat down on a box near the window and began to unroll the ribboned parchment, wondering what was inscribed by learning's finger on those mysterious skins. I unrolled, I gazed, I perused. The diploma in the School of French was the first I chanced to open. Thus it read:

SHEEPSKIN COLLEGE.

This is to certify that Mr. Heredity Beans has completed the Course in the School of French, having learned to write and speak that language fluently.

In confirmation whereof we place our hand and seal.

JOE DOODLE,
TOM FIDDLER,
BILL PUMPKINS,
Trustees.
PETIT MAGNAN,
Professor.

I pondered and pondered that splendid tribute to my genius—"having learned to write and speak that language fluently." How a few ribbons, a dressed lamb's skin, and a stroke of a professor's quill can transform a fellow, thought I. On the very day of examination it took me five hours to write twenty lines of French, and then it was only moderately well done; now I can write fluently, for the professor hath sworn to it. Until Commencement, I could not make a French barber understand whether I wanted my hair cut, my beard

shaved, or my shoes blacked. I could not ask in respectable French for a dish of cowpeas, but now I can "speak that language fluently." Dumfounded, electrified, entranced, I stuck my feet out of the window, leaned back on my tripod, spat three times, smiled a few, looked into the misty future, and concluding the precious skins should be devoted to worthy offices, I mentally disposed of my hides, about seventy-five in number, as follows: Three to my bootblack; make a crupper for Bucephalus out of one; cut a pair of shoe-strings off another; stop a hole in the window with one; trade balance for cake and peanuts.

The reason I received only seventy-five diplomas rested in the fact that the sheep gave out, but this catastrophe will be averted in the future, the trustees of Sheepskin College having purchased two thousand acres of good pasturage for the raising of sheep. It is said that the trustees since my day have established a blue ribbon factory, the number of prizes adorned with that article being now about two thousand and forty. Besides my sheepskins, I was the recipient of a few honors in the shape of medals and prizes—about one hundred and forty-seven, I think. My "In Memoriam" secured thirty-nine, an essay on "How to Manage Women" nearly as many more, while I won a number for the best imitation of hiccoughs. The medal which I valued most, however, was that presented to me by the institution as the best crower in college.

Commencement honors, however, had not been exhausted on the students, as there was a reserve fund of degrees that seemed to be growing larger year by

year. Naturally, since it was a religious college, few honorary titles were conferred except the degree of D.D., but that was handed out multitudinously.

It will be remembered that the time of which I write is Commencement. The college grounds are thronged with smiling youth and decrepit age. Sweet strains of music fill the air, laughing mirth sits on every lip. There's beauty in the sunshine, there's beauty in the trees, beauty in rich wreaths of flowers, beauty in glad young faces, beauty everywhere. I look pretty well myself. But stop! the bell rings for the meeting of the trustees.

Did you ever see a trustee of Sheepskin College? Well, go to Commencement; wait till the crowd gathers and the bell rings. See a man with a beaver on, wearing a long-tail coat that floats in the wind; look out for a white vest and a pewter-headed walking-stick. Observe said man, unconscious of all things here below, rushing toward the chapel as if the day of judgment had been announced, with his eyes leveled at the stars—that's a trustee of Sheepskin College. On this mysterious personage depends the promotion and degreeing of the preachers who are his satellites. He can raise them up to honor at will. He has but to utter the word, and, lo! the preacher rises from his insignificance into a full-orbed Doctor of Divinity.

The trustee may be a lunatic or a fool, or he may not be able to tell the difference between the New Testament and an almanac, yet with great authority he informs the world which man it shall call Doctor and which it shall not. *Mirabile dictu!* To be sure, the trustees are very popular gentlemen with a large num-

ber of clergymen, their favor being worth more than rubies and their vote more than fine gold. Ah! how sweet to the priestly tribe of Levi to be called of men "Rabbi, Rabbi."

The trustees at last reach solemn conclave, while before them lie five hundred and seventeen modest applications for the doctorate. Some of these applications have been renewed ten times, and now come again, fortified with new pleas and stronger claims. It is truly an anxious and interesting season for expectant clergymen; it is the hour when D.D.'s are born. The preachers instinctively get nearer the chapel; some gather in the dormitories, looking out of the windows on the D.D. factory, all declaring they don't expect, and don't want the honor.

The college guardians tarry long at the board. Five hundred and sixteen of the applications have passed smoothly, but the five-hundred-and-seventeenth hangs fire. He seems to have no gifts and no graces; he is a poor speaker, a poor scholar, a poor preacher. Yet he attends Commencement punctually, and if possible, something should be done for him. So a committee of seven of the wisest and most accurate of the board is appointed to visit the brother, and take a careful measurement of his abdomen. If the measure reaches the standard, it will be well with the son of Levi. The revered sages wait on the gentleman whose glory seems to be swinging in the balance, throw him down on a student's couch, and tell him to swell up. He swells up, reaches the required notch, gets his degree, and has been swelling ever since. It is rumored that the trustees have adjourned. The aspiring theo-

logians scramble out of the dormitories and down the stairways. Snobbs breaks his leg in the rush.

I remember only a few of the distinguished gentlemen who got their degree when I graduated and the grounds on which their degree was conferred. The Rev. January Jones received the double sacred consonant because he was a friend of the college; the Rev. Shadrach Bones, because it was thought his influence in behalf of the institution would thus be secured; the Rev. Jonas Puzzle, because it would put him on equality with the other D.D.'s in Sloshville; the Rev. Ebenezer Gunn, because it would help him get a call; the Rev. Sunflower Smith, because he had written an elegy on a dog; the Rev. Malachi Botts, because he had just recovered from a severe spell of cramp colic; the Rev. Josiah Smash, because his stomach was the right size; the Rev. Mullikins Bunch, because it would help him to marry a widow; the Rev. John Bottle, because he had been on hand fifteen years, and had become so dilapidated that, unless doctored, he would peg out; the Rev. Popkins Cabbagehead, because he preached through his nose an hour and a half without injuring that organ; the Rev. Agag Cholagogue, because he made a pun at the college banquet; the Rev. Ipecac Brown, because his church wanted a change, and threatened to leave the denomination unless the trustees gave the said Ipecac the wings of divinity with which to fly to some other field; and the Rev. Woodpecker Donquey, because he wept at his mother-in-law's funeral.

These are all good reasons; and wisdom is justified of all her children. The last thing I saw of the new

doctors of divinity, they were posturing on a plot of sand in the campus, making D's.

The fuss of Commencement Day had died away, while the delighted crowds were fast dispersing. So let me return to the Cyclopes.

Owing to examinations, I had not seen much of the president's family of late; still they had fed me on cream and cake. I learned, however, from the college "Literary Comet," that the Doctor and his wife were to accompany their daughter on a protracted bridal tour through Europe, Palestine, and Egypt, collecting a costly geological cabinet and many rare specimens of other 'ologies for the college; and that, provided the Egyptians were disposed to sell, the Doctor would bring back one of the smaller of the pyramids.

This statement accounted for the excitement prevalent in the president's home. The Cyclopes were evidently enjoying a boom. The Doctor had taken up again his French studies, and could be seen traversing the back porch, imagining himself in Paris, conversing with eminent scientists, or else ordering a hack, or inquiring the way to Notre Dame, all in French. It also was possible to catch a glimpse of him familiarizing himself with an exhaustive guidebook he had just purchased. Mrs. Cyclops usually was bending over a large atlas of the world, marking out the bridal tour. Finikie seemed to be engaged in making up finery.

I was packing up my trunk to start homeward next morning. While matters stood thus, a village lad walked carelessly into my room, handing me a paper which I reproduce on the next page.

MR. H. BEANS,

TO THE EAGLE EMPORIUM, Dr.

To	1 traveling suit for Mrs. Cyclops.....	\$ 50 00
	13 dresses for Mrs. Cyclops.....	340 00
	3 pr. shoes for Mrs. Cyclops.....	10 50
	2 pr. slippers for Mrs. Cyclops.....	4 00
	7 fans for Mrs. Cyclops.....	1 75
	Miscellany	45 00
To	trousseau for Miss Cyclops.....	380 00
To	1 suit broadcloth for Dr. Cyclops.....	65 00
	3 doz. shirts for Dr. Cyclops.....	44 00
	1 beaver for Dr. Cyclops.....	8 00
	Underwear for Dr. Cyclops.....	20 00
	Gold-headed cane.....	5 00
	1 pr. boots.....	13 00
	1 opera glass.....	3 00
	1 pr. gold-rimmed spectacles.....	7 00

Total amount.....\$992 25

As our establishment is run on a strictly cash basis, and as you are a stranger to us, we beg a prompt settlement of the above account.

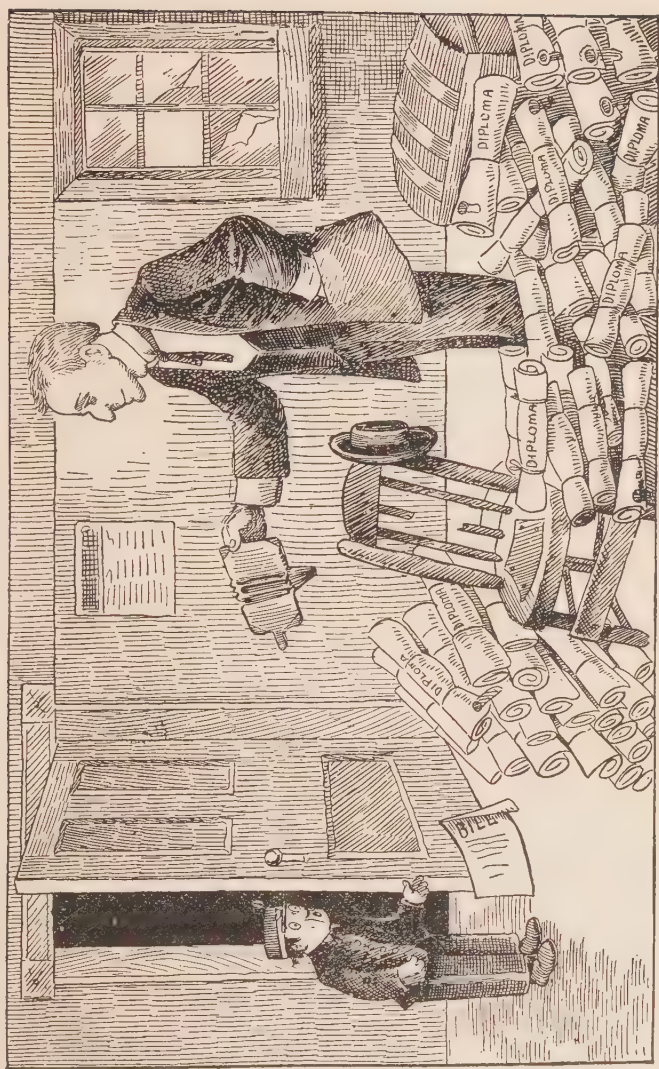
Very respectfully,

EAGLE EMPORIUM Co.

After my bewilderment had sufficiently subsided, pointing to the president's house, I told the boy he had mistaken the place; then, taking out my shabby old purse, I invited the youth to look within and report to the Eagle Emporium what he saw.

Next morning, after breakfast, having harnessed up Bucephalus and strapped my trunk to the buggy, I set out for Shakerag. As I passed the president's house, the Doctor, in company with Mrs. Cyclops and Finikie, sat expectant on the porch, holding a guide-book in his hand.

"Halloa! Red," he cried out. I reined up and looked



"TAKING OUT MY SHABBY OLD PURSE, I INVITED THE YOUTH TO LOOK WITHIN AND REPORT
TO THE EAGLE EMPORIUM WHAT HE SAW."

back. "By the way, Beans, has the Emporium said anything to you about that little bill of ours? I intended mentioning it to you, but forgot it."

"Yes, sir," said I. "I told the boy he was mistaken in the name, and directed him to you. It's all right, Doctor."

"Yes! yes! Well—er—Red, old fellow, could you make it convenient to settle that little matter? I'm scarce of funds, you know, and then we'll soon all be one, anyway, like the disciples, having all things in common."

"Impossible, Doctor; I never had so much money in my life. The largest amount I ever had of my own money was seven dollars and a half, left me by my grandmother."

"But the \$75,000."

"Sir?" said I.

"Did you not receive a legacy of \$75,000 from some source?"

"Too absurd, Doctor. The papers made some such ridiculous blunder, but that's all."

"I don't understand, sir. What about the marriage and the bridal tour?"

"I know nothing of such things more than I saw in the 'Comet.' I hope you'll have a good time, Doctor."

"Is this affair all a hoax?" gasped Mrs. Cyclops. "Sir, didn't you court Finikie Cyclops, and represent yourself as having a fortune?"

"No, madam; I never did either. I am as poor as a church-mouse, and never courted but one girl, to whom I am now engaged. I told Dr. Cyclops plainly that I was engaged, when he visited me."

"Dr. Cyclops," said Mrs. Cyclops, "are you the author of all this folly? Have you involved us hopelessly in debt? Have you made us a butt of ridicule for all our friends? And all over this poor, country boor!"

"Ah! as the poet has well sung, 'I've seen my fondest hopes decay,' and my noblest visions fade like the 'unsubstantial pageant of a dream.' No Europe! no fossils, no Arabian steeds! Tush, pish-sh!" sighed the Doctor.

Finikie, overhearing the conversation, fainted, gasping "\$75,000!"

"Poor, piney-woods scrub, and a \$75,000 farce!" exclaimed Mrs. Cyclops.

"And the wasted cake and cream!" said Finikie, as she revived.

"Fi-diddle!" chimed in the Doctor, in a melancholy key.

"And that Eagle Emporium bill!" exclaimed Mrs. Cyclops, sure to have the last word.

I bade the unhappy trio a sad farewell and learned with sincere regret, from a student who left two days later, that at the time of his departure a number of physicians were in consultation at the Cyclopes'. But I couldn't help it.

I G O T O T H E W A R

Chapter XII.

IT was the memorable year 1861. War and rumors of war filled the land. Fort Sumter had just been taken, and cannon were belching out death along the frontier. Trains daily were transporting soldiers to the field of action. Gentle hands were wont to wave snowy handkerchiefs from porch and window at every brass button that passed. I became exceedingly patriotic all of a sudden, and longed to display on the field of battle the military genius I felt I possessed. I read all the books I could find relating to wars, assassinations, and massacres. In one of my blood-thirsty inspirations, my fingers itching for the fight, I climbed upon the smokehouse and shouted defiantly, "Hurrah for liberty!" It would have been a funeral occasion had the enemy come in sight at that moment. But the scene passed off without bloodshed.

Just fresh from college, I, naturally enough, was unskilled in the use of arms and quite lacking in common sense, so, I made it my first care to practice gunnery. As a suitable representation of the foe, I rolled out from the shed a tar barrel, which I set on end, placing a mammoth pumpkin on it for a head. I thrust a piece of old lightning rod through the pumpkin to symbolize a rifle—for, at that stage of my martial career, I would

not fight an unarmed foe, and besides, it evinced an inexpensive magnanimity. Then I stood off about twenty-five paces and fired away with an old ante-Revolutionary gun, charged with buckshot.

"I suspect that fellow feels the medicinal properties of shot," said I, with great satisfaction as I saw the smoke clear away. On examination, however, I found my enemy unhurt, while over the hill I espied old Guinea John, my father's blacksmith, capering in a most interesting manner, and rubbing his legs with unwonted zeal, as if to indicate that I could do better at long taw than short. So I loaded up again to try my luck. Bang! went my gun, but there still was no indication of good shooting save the squealing of a pig that happened to be crossing the lot.

As long, however, as I was in the midst of such encouraging evidences of the vitality of my shot, I kept good heart, resolving to try my skill one more time. Having put a handful of shot in my trusty gun, I crept up within ten paces of my man, shouting, "Surrender!" but the lightning rod not being lowered with satisfactory promptitude, I fired point-blank at the stubborn foe. I bagged the game that time; one shot grazed the pumpkin, while three entered the barrel, giving vent to oozing tar. "I've brought the blood at last!" I cried exultingly; and, grasping the rusty old saber my father had used in the Mexican War, I savagely thrust the pumpkin through, determining to take no prisoners.

My next preparation for war was to rig myself up in brass buttons, put on a military cap, mount Bucephalus, and give a war-whoop. All of these things

I did after the manner of a true soldier, and then I started off for "the front" and glory. Coon Hollow was in the line of my journey to the Virginia army (and, by the way, I can't conceive of any journey in which Coon Hollow would not have been in my line) and Polytechnic, as fortune would have it, met me at the gate with smiles and roses.

"To-day, dear girl, I draw my sword for my country and thee," said I, brandishing my old saber in the sultry air, and cutting up a maypop vine by the roots.

"Oh! Red, it breaks my heart to think of your going to this cruel, cruel war."

"It's my country's call, sweet cherub," said I, with stoic firmness. "I haste me to battle that I may divide the spoil with the victors. I only fear the war will end before I get a chance to bathe my blade in blood."

Just here, old Guinea John drove by in a cart laden with a coffin and two big trunks. The latter only having caught Polytechnic's eye, the innocent creature, looking trustfully into my visual organs, asked, "Why do you carry so many clothes? Are you to be gone from me so long?"

"'Wherefore those trunks,' do you ask? Why, my shroud and burial wreaths are in one, and I'm taking the other to bring back scalps in. Good-by, my love," said I, raising my foot in the stirrup.

"Oh! do stay to tea!" pleaded the fair maid.

"No!" said I sternly; "every moment is golden. I'm afraid I'll not be there in time for the first battle."

"Ah! I know you'll be killed. You are so brave that you will rush into the thickest of the fight, and perish at the cannon's mouth."

"I'll return with my sword or on it," rejoined I, shaking my spurs significantly.

This frightened the dear girl, who, with tears glistening in her bright blue eyes, unmindful of the differing conditions, repeated Andromache's touching appeal to Hector:

"Too brave! thy valor yet will cause thy death:
Thou hast no pity on thy tender child,
Nor me, unhappy one, who soon must be
Thy widow. All the Greeks will rush on thee
To take thy life. A happier lot were mine,
If I must lose thee, to go down to earth,
For I shall have no hope when thou art gone—
Nothing but sorrow. Father I have none,
And no dear mother. Great Achilles slew
My father when he sacked the populous town
Of the Cilicians—Thebe with high gates.
Hector, thou
Art father and dear mother now to me,
And brother and my youthful spouse besides.
In pity keep within the fortress here,
Nor make thy child an orphan nor thy wife
A widow.'"

Fortunately, I remembered a few lines of Hector's reply, which I had been required to memorize at school as a penalty for missing a geography lesson:

"All this
I bear in mind, dear wife; but I should stand
Ashamed before the men and long-robed dames
Of Troy, were I to keep aloof and shun
The conflict, cowardlike.'"

"My Reddie, should the sad news that you are wounded or dead reach me, tell me where I may find you," said she, putting her little hand in mine.

"Beneath cannon balls and the corpses of heroes," returned I, in martial accents.

"Oh! my soldier boy," said the sympathetic creature; "if you only had a horse instead of a mule!"

"Yes, I might gobble up more of the enemy as they fly."

"And then, in case of defeat, you might stand a better chance of escape."

"Defeat—escape?" repeated I, disdainfully. "Child, do you know the history of my ancestors? My grandfather fought in the Revolution, my father in the Mexican War, while my grandmother whipped both of them. Fighting stock, you see, all around. Besides, in the first encounter—there'll hardly be more than one if I get there in time—I'll capture a fiery charger, and make a martin-box of his rider."

Clad in my fighting clothes, my spurs ringing like distant Alpine bells, I left the beautiful girl, subdued by tears and rapt in admiration, as I mounted *Bucephalus* and drew my saber, shouting,

"On! ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!"

After a journey of two days and a half, I reached a small inland town, which seemed to be all astir about something. Crowds of people had gathered from the surrounding country to witness the glory of some great occasion. Houses were decorated with miniature flags, cannon made of flowers, and small, crossed, tin swords, while from the courthouse floated the Stars and Bars in undiluted pugnacity. I happened to learn, from the conversation of a couple of old rustics who

sauntered on before me, that Jefferson Davis was expected momentarily to pass through the town, and that this tremendous flutter was designed as an ovation in his honor.

As I drew up near the courthouse square, my mule dishonored the occasion by voicing his emotion in a terrific bray. This, forsooth, attracted the attention of the multitude, who, looking upon my bright uniform and untarnished buttons, mistook me for the President, and shouted, "Hurrah for Jeff Davis!" Mr. Davis being unknown in those parts, and, like all noted persons, supposed to be fine-looking and to possess unusual dignity, the mistake thus was easily made. The town band instantly struck up "Dixie," two old anvils placed one on the other, with a little powder between, somewhat comically performed the function of a cannon, and the crowd broke forth into "three cheers for Jeff Davis."

In the feverish excitement that ensued the townspeople gave me no opportunity to explain or to deny, but escorted me in great state and with august ceremonies to a banquet prepared expressly for the Southern chief magistrate. When I entered the townhall, about three hundred girls, with banners streaming from staves, filed before me, each depositing a kiss for the "father of his country." I sat down at a special table, and was waited on by the fairest of ministering spirits, while bands played and anvils roared. After I had eaten as much as I thought a great man ought to eat, I arose, and calling up the girls in line again, gave them a paternal kiss. An old gentleman, holding a flagon in his hand, stepped up to me affectionately,

saying, "Here's a bit of old wine I've been saving some forty years; you can do no greater honor than to test its merits." I declined the sparkling fluid on the ground of temperance principles, and was about to express suitable thanks, when a noble old lady, catching me by the elbow, led me to a fine ice cream freezer, whose unadulterated contents I carefully began to remove.

Again the girls formed in line and were surging toward me for another kiss, but pointing to the freezer, I asked to be excused. Every five minutes they formed and renewed their march, seeking to express their patriotism in cheap kisses. Being wearied with lip service, I engaged an old codger to take a stand in the great hall and to accommodate the affectionate patriots in my stead. He planted a Confederate flag in his wide-brimmed hat, hung a brass button around his neck, claimed to be one of my cabinet officers, and then—

Maidens to right of him,
Maidens to left of him,
Maidens in front of him
 Frolicked and kissed him;
Rushed on with whoop and yell,
On they surged pelly-mell,
Into the jaws of man—
The mouth of the old "fel.;"
 Never one missed him.

While these interesting performances were in progress, tenderest hands were ramming oranges and apples into my pockets, and eager eyes showered upon me their softest benedictions. Suddenly an eccentric

old gentleman came near spoiling everything by calling upon me for a speech. What in the world could I say on such an occasion? What were the great issues of the day? What were we going to fight about? What principles were involved, and who involved 'em?

I still had no idea that I was posing as Jeff Davis; and yet, I marveled why everybody was so wondrous kind. I thought to evade the difficulty by cultivating my freezer more assiduously, but alas! I had struck bottom—and all hands were crying wildly, "Speech! speech!" I wanted to call up the girls again for relief—and by this let all men know the awful strait to which I was reduced—but they had become scattered in the crowd, and I am sure they would have been greatly disappointed had they known the opportunity they missed. But they would be ready for the next man. So nothing was left me but to speak.

"Fellow-countrymen," said I, like a modern Demosthenes, "the times are rife with smoke and battle; your liberties are threatened, your homes endangered, and your—" here a plank tilted up, throwing me on top of a bunch of men, while the multitude frantically rushed around me, cheering at every breath, supposing me to be too much overcome with patriotism to be able to continue. Getting, however, a foothold on the shoulders of an athletic citizen, I concluded,

"Strike—till the last armed foe expires;
Strike—for potatoes, peanuts, briars;
Strike—for the collards of your sires;
Niggers—and cotton lands!"

And I struck—for the next town—leaving the fragments for Mr. Davis, who arrived an hour later.

I reached the plain of Manassas, breathing out slaughter and destruction, just as Johnston and Beauregard were posting the Confederate forces for battle. In front, the enemy's massive blue columns came moving on to the sound of the drum. The two armies confronted each other for a brief period in silence. While the silence lasted I got along pretty well, but when in the distance I heard the hoarse voice of artillery, and nearer, the sharp crack of musketry, while all along the line minie balls began to whistle and shells began to burst, I felt dismal. As men were falling around me on every side, and as I strove to muster the inherited valor of my ancestry by repeating the Latin motto

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori,

suddenly a cannon ball beheaded a huge pine tree hard by, causing me to realize the difference between a man and a tar barrel, a rifle and a lightning rod. Immediately inverting the order of Bucephalus's extremities, putting his tail where his head had been, I fired both barrels of my trusty weapon toward the blue dome of heaven, and with drawn saber, was on the point of charging the equator, when Bucephalus took a strange notion to stay where he was, and commenced backing—that's the way a mule indicates his preference for staying where he is—but to back in his position was to charge the enemy! The effect was magical on the Southern cavalry. Whole squadrons darted forward, with Bucephalus still backing in the lead, while the enemy, alarmed by this novel method of warfare, fled precipitately toward the District of Columbia.



"IMMEDIATELY INVERTING THE ORDER OF BUCEPHALUS'S EXTREMITIES, . . . I FIRED BOTH BARRELS OF MY GUN TOWARD THE BLUE DOME OF HEAVEN."

Thus was Bucephalus the determining factor at Bull Run. When my trusty mule found out that the enemy was fleeing, having turned around his head far enough to see what was going on, he turned the remainder of his anatomy and assisted in the pursuit. He would have been running yet, I suppose, if it had not been for the fact that we both got hungry and stopped for supper at a splendidly-equipped commissariat wagon left by the enemy in his precipitate flight. Having indulged our appetites we stretched out under the stars for a quiet snooze and did not awake until the sun was high in the heavens the next day.

Then we meandered gracefully back to camp and most unexpectedly found that we were the heroes of the hour and the battle. General Beauregard knew it and so did the entire army, for that matter. The enemy likewise was aware of the fact, and General Winfield Scott so felt the force of the presence of Heredity Beans and his gallant mule that he resigned his commission, declaring that he could not fight against an inverted jackass and an insane one mounted upon him.

You, dear reader, can imagine, if you exercise your brain overtime, the exceeding joy with which I indited letters to the folks at home telling them of the exploits of master and mule. My father, of course, declared that his doctrine of hereditation was working out most clearly in me his only son. He predicted that soon I would become the commander-in-chief of the Confederate forces and that soon after that I would sweep the enemy up into Canada. But the best of all was what my darling Polytechnic said about my adven-

ture. I was her hero and her king. I was also the recipient of a fine pair of socks knitted by her fair fingers—and I needed them more than I did her kind words.

For my gallantry at Manassas I was promoted to the captaincy of a squad of foragers, and during the remainder of the war spent my time about equally in chasing the enemy and being chased by him. But when the end came, I surrendered perpetually. I took up an old United States flag, waved it over the flop-eared head of Bucephalus, and with hearty good will shouted "God bless the old flag! God save the Union!"

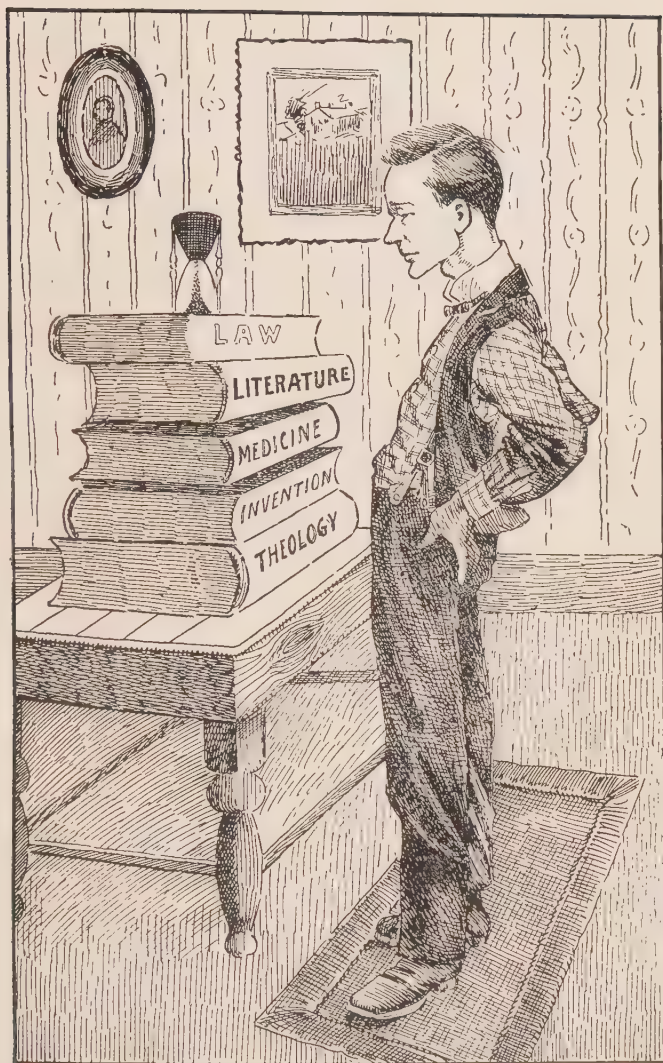
The war over, I made my way to Shakerag, where I tied my mule to a stack of fodder, and began to exercise the arts of peace.

S T A R T I N G I N L I F E

Chapter XIII.

ALL too soon the necessity of addressing myself to some remunerative work forced itself upon me. The necessity was clear enough, but what should the work be? What should I do for a living? This was the momentous question that met me at the portals of ripening manhood. The world around me was rushing madly after gain, and I joined the multitude. "Make money" became my motto, and seemed embroidered in my visions in threads of gold. With what mystic wand should I smite the tree of luck and shake therefrom the coin in golden showers? What profession should I adopt as the one in which to shine all my life? What pursuit of the many should I join in the race for fame and fortune and high station?

I first thought I would be a lawyer. I was tolerably sure I had some turn for public speaking, and there is always room in the upper story of the legal profession for first-class talent. Of course, that was the sort I had. What fortunes are sometimes made by a single speech! What great names adorn the records of the Bar! Still, there arose in my mind several serious objections. The law is the only profession in which value is attached to a lie. In the legal profession a lie ordi-



"WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR A LIVING?"

narily is worth from \$5 to \$25,000; now and then, when a fortune is involved, a lie, well put together, neatly dovetailed, double veneered, highly polished, of double back action, warranted to stand in any climate, and neither to spring nor to crack, will bring \$50,000. But, being distantly related to the man who cut the cherry tree, and thinking I might some day want to go to heaven, I abandoned the idea of becoming a lawyer. Somehow or other I cannot imagine a lawyer getting into the New Jerusalem.

Next I wooed the Muse. Under a happy inspiration, I discovered that I was possessed of the gift of poesy in a large degree. Yes, I was born a poet, not made; and whole firkins of the crude stuff had been leaking out of me in beatific visions, beautiful dreams, and unrecorded thoughts that stood out as mental rainbows on the dark cloud of life. The magazines were waiting for the coming poet? He had come. Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Beans! I resolved to stun the reading world with a drama in verse. I'd tell a pathetic story of a clergyman who, on his first visit to the coast, foolishly ventured into the surf. This would make a tragedy to touch all hearts, even those of magazine editors, which I reckoned to be hardest of all.

I conceived the plot in the moonlight, and composed as the sun was bathing the eastern hills in golden splendor. That is, I composed one verse a day that way. True verse does not rush, even from the masters, in cataracts, but flows like limpid brooks. Here is the poem, which I called "A Divine Comedy," although I neither thought to make a pun out of the title

nor to imitate the titular style of my fellow-poet, Dante, and his *Divina Comedia*:

In August, eighteen sixty-four
A parson went to see the shore;
He saw the shore, he saw the sea,
And danced and laughed quite merrily.

His form was lithe, his eye was bright,
His brain was clear, his step was light:
He plunged into the briny deep—
And glad his shout, and high his leap.

The waves were rough, the tide was high;
The undertow came sweeping by:
The pulpit star at once did shout
To all around to help him out.

His eyes the while did larger grow,
His breast did heave, his cheeks did glow:
He plunged and leaped, and seemed to be
Preparing for eternity.

At length this son of thunder cried:
"A shark! a shark is at my side!"
His soul took fright, his body rolled—
Yet nothing save a crab had hold.

At last the parson came ashore,
And brine did ooze from every pore;
He clapped his hands in glad refrain:
"Nor moons like these shall shine again!"

This is the man I seek to praise,
These are his sorrows and his ways—
A man of noble mien and mood,
Who reached the shore and then boohooed.

I mailed my poem to a leading magazine, and smiled after I went to sleep. I'll wake up in ten days and find myself famous, I thought; if not, let me die the death

of the disappointed. A hundred thousand readers would suddenly open their eyes to behold a new comet. Who's Heredity Beans? would ask men rushing to business, women in their parlors, children at play. My fortune I considered made; all respectable editors now would tap at my door with golden knuckles. My facile pen henceforth would know no respite. Next I would write a book of poems; then I would build a castle on the Mississippi!

In order that the reader may know how it all came out, I give herewith the literature connected with the publication of this poem. I cannot comment on it now, for my feelings are very deep even to this day.

EDITOR OF "THE SUN BURST."

My dear Sir: I send you by this mail my new drama in verse, entitled "A Divine Comedy." I imagine price will be no item with you. No doubt you will not care to let any other species of verse appear in the same number. I can't promise to fly so high every time, and I will not engage to furnish a poem for every issue. Give the minor poets a chance; don't let me monopolize the magazine.

Check on New York, please.

Yours, in *ars poetica*,

H. BEANS.

MR. H. BEANS.

Dear Sir: Your poem received; it has merit, but we have engaged all the poetry we shall need for the rest of our earthly career. We return the MS. with thanks.

With esteem,

H. I. LARITY,

Editor of "The Sun Burst."

EDITOR OF "THE WEEKLY COMET."

My dear Sir: I herewith inclose you a dramatic poem that will startle the literary world. It is rich

in imagery, elegant in diction, original in conception, and—invaluable in money. I am not afraid to let you put your own price on it, since I know your high appreciation of the poetic art. I cannot engage to furnish another poem under a week. If your circulation jumps up a few thousands, you will know why. Please make remittance by check or registered letter.

Yours in the bonds of poesy, H. BEANS.

MR. H. BEANS.

Dear Sir: Your verses received. They have a vein of genuine humor; but my columns are overcrowded, and hence I cannot use them. There is a rare treat for some periodical that is not so unfortunately handicapped. The poem is simply invaluable, and I'm sure my life will be shortened at least a year because I cannot adorn my pages with it. I would like to see it in print. The MS. is herewith returned.

Affectionately yours, I. R. ONICAL,
Editor of "The Weekly Comet."

EDITOR OF "THE MAGNA CHARTA."

My dear Sir: Inclosed please find a little poem, which I shall not attempt to describe. Though a stranger, I am sure you will hereafter take me into your most intimate friendship forever. The poem is so inwrought with pathos, that I shall associate no money value therewith, but present it to your readers as an offering of love.

Yours, with a poet's devotion, H. BEANS.

MR. H. BEANS.

Dear Sir: Your comedy received. Sorry we cannot avail ourselves of it. Please find MS. inclosed.

Truly yours, JOHN SHORTHORSE,
Editor of "Magna Charta."

"THE AMERICAN JESTER."

I send you a copy of my poem, hoping you may

find a place therefor in your columns. No charge.

Yours truly,

H. BEANS.

MR. H. BEANS.

Sir: We shall be delighted to insert your poem in our next issue. It will cost you \$2.50 in advance. If this is not satisfactory, please forward stamp for return of M.S.

Yours, etc.,

J. O. KERR, "American Jester."

If this correspondence does not indicate heathenism, I don't know what heathenism is. Such ignorance! such indifference to art! such lunacy! While my masterpiece of poesy was being assaulted by these anarchists of journalism, and the money I had earned by overwrought brains was being denied me, I was arrested for taxes. My poetic functions ceased.

Of course, medicine suggested itself next. What a grand study—man! I got my mother's old medical book from the shelf and began my studies. I bought a secondhand male skeleton from the family physician, and borrowed a book on physiology. My attention was directed first to the skeleton's teeth. I examined critically the molars, bicuspid, and others that remained in the mouth, and approximated his age at ninety-seven years. I next measured him and computed his height as six feet seven inches. I became intensely interested. I next weighed the bones, and decided that the man in full flesh must have weighed four hundred and eighty pounds. I examined the action of the right arm, and discovered it was susceptible of a graceful, rotary motion, such as is employed by a minister in turning his manuscript or making a ges-

ture. His knees indicated prayer—why, of course—he was a preacher. I then looked through the eye-sockets, and, beholding the immense cavities on either side of the head, set him down for an illustrious bishop.

Having become quite familiar with the bones of my distinguished subject, I pored over physiology, studying bones, muscles, tissues, nerves, blood vessels, capillary tubes, chyle, and a thousand other things I hope never to hear of again, until my first course was ended. My second course of study was in the drugs and materials of which medicine is made. A gilded dawn rose on me now. I moved among elixirs, fluid compounds, powders, pills, and plasters. I calculated how many varieties of pills could be prepared from the many elements, and found their name—and their number too—was legion. What an infinite number of liver regulators might be compounded! How vast a field for speculation and ingenuity! Bitters *ad infinitum*; liver pads *ad absurdum*. Endless cough drops and baby syrups. Joyful prospect for an inventive turn of mind.

I told some of my friends that I was studying medicine and was requested to inform them the name of the college wherein I was prosecuting my labors. This set me to thinking, for the only college in which I was enrolled was that at the head of which was Professor Heredity Beans. Should I go to one of the medical institutions doing business in various sections of the country or should I continue my studies at home in Shakerag?

After all, what was the use of spending a lot of

money and where was I to get it to spend? Why couldn't I do as well in my attic with mother's old doctor book until I had become the compounder and proprietor of a first-class patent medicine? After that, when I had made enough money to maintain myself I would be able to choose the best medical college in the country as my mine of information and then after graduation open up a college for the instruction of other followers of the healing art.

The patent medicine idea struck me as being a particularly good one. Think of the many thousands and thousands of suffering persons I would be able to cure, relieve, and benefit! Of course, some of the people who might take my medicine for cancer, or consumption, or insanity might die, but then, I figured out, they would die anyway, and really my remedy might do them some little good and keep them alive a little while longer. And even at that, it would not be cancer, consumption, or insanity that I would seek to cure, and so if they took the medicine that I patented it was their own fault, and I couldn't be blamed.

Three weeks having elapsed since I entered upon my medical studies, I felt confident I was prepared for the active duties of my profession. The first step was to compound a patent medicine. Early one morning I found myself surrounded by bottles of different sizes, with twenty-five cents' worth of drugs in my pocket. By nightfall and with the consistent use of my drugs and plenty of good pump water my bottles were full and I was ready to do some advertising. Cogitation resulted in an announcement to the public which I reproduce on the following page:

Why Don't You Use BEANS' BIPED BITTERS

This Medicine is Nature's Remedy, and the Greatest Discovery of Modern Science. It has never failed to cure every disease to which the flesh is heir. It is perfectly harmless, and warranted to give immediate and permanent relief in all disorders arising from derangements of the liver, blood, kidneys, etc.

DIRECTIONS FOR USE

For Headache, look at the bottle with one eye.
For Neuralgia, look at it with the other eye.
For Rheumatism, jump over it.
For Cramp Colic, swallow it.
For Dyspepsia, soak the dyspepsia in it.
For Cold, boil the cold in it.
For Chills, gently remove the stopper.
For Blues, give a dose to your mother-in-law.
For Burns, hang it up the chimney.
For Toothache, smell it.
For all other ailments, take a tablespoonful every seven minutes while sleeping.

\$5,000 REWARD FOR A WELL-AUTHENTICATED CASE
OF FAILURE

INDORSED BY THE CLERGY EVERYWHERE

PRICE; Half-pint bottle, 25 cents; pint bottle, 50
cents; quart, \$1.

UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS

"Splendid!"—*W. Shakespeare*. "Superb!"—*Christopher Columbus*. "I indorse the above."—*Cleopatra*. "So do I."—*Nebuchadnezzar*. "Ditto."—*Jupiter Olympus*. "It sure does more than it claims."—*Jean D'Arc*. "The wonder of the age."—*Robinson Crusoe*. "The glory of the world."—*Julius Caesar*. "Wouldn't be without it for \$50."—*M. T. Cicero*. "Wouldn't have committed suicide if I had had it."—*Hannibal*. "I died at St. Helena because I couldn't get it."—*N. Bonaparte*.

INDORSED BY LEADING DRUGGISTS THROUGHOUT
THE UNION, AMONG WHOM ARE THE FOLLOWING
WELL-KNOWN FIRMS

Beaumont & Fletcher; Castor & Pollux; Scylla & Charybdis;
Esau & Jacob; Shadrach, Meshach & Co.; Arcturus & Sons;
Damon & Pythias Co., Incorporated; and John Bull & Bros.

This advertisement, inserted in half a dozen leading papers, brought me a cart-load of orders the first seven days. My very success, however, disheartened me. I was ashamed of being a member of the human race, for it became quite clear to me that the world is a vast fool asylum, kept by a few sane individuals here and there. As the orders were C. O. D., no money was lost by the senders, and no medicine sent by the proprietor. I quit doctoring, resolving forever to lead "the simple life."

The most ample field that now opened up to me was that of invention. What fortunes had been made by a trick of the imagination! What millions in money had rolled out of a first-class lucky thought! So I began the arduous career of an inventor.

It was twelve o'clock at night when, by the light of a tallow candle, I put the finishing touch to my Revolving Corkscrew. Next morning at peep of day I stealthily boxed up the model and drawings, and sent them by express to Ima LummoX, patent attorney, in Washington, to ascertain whether the invention could be patented, although it was unnecessary to put such an interrogation, since, as I learned subsequently, no invention, no matter what its aim or value, ever has failed to be patented. Sometimes it is true, there are a great many reserves, qualifications, and limitations, but sooner or later, the United States Government grants "valuable letters patent." The attorney, therefore, returned answer that in his opinion the invention was patentable, and for the consideration of \$15 as a preliminary payment he would open the case.

Two months of anxious and sleepless nights passed

away before my agent in Washington informed me that the patent had been granted, and that it would be highly appropriate to forward to his address the balance of the fees for himself and the Government. In a few days came my Letters Patent, adorned with much blue ribbon and bearing the authoritative seal of the United States of America, containing this august passage: "Now therefore these Letters Patent are to grant unto the said Heredity Beans, his heirs, or assigns, for a term of seventeen years, the exclusive right to make, use, and vend the said invention throughout the United States and Territories thereof."

This was almost too much for my system, already impaired by the excessive mental labor expended in the process of invention, and still further weakened by the excitement occasioned by so vast an enterprise. Think of it, I thought. This great republic confers upon me privileges it confers upon no other man. I am the only man in the universe that can make or sell, in these United States, revolving corkscrews for the space of seventeen years. Fifty millions of people are forbidden by law to infringe my rights, and the army and navy of the United States are ready to defend my invention. It is in my power to arraign any member of Congress, to sue Vanderbilt, or to indict the President himself for invading my prerogatives. States and territories to the extent of four million square miles subject to my control—from the St. Lawrence to the Rio Grande!

Of course, these telling facts made due impression on the people of Toadville, who considered my fortune made, and regarded me as a genius of the first order,

being the only man who ever had obtained a patent in that vicinity. I became at once a personage of great prominence. I received invitations to all the barbecues that took place in the community, was called on to make speeches at all public gatherings, and on St. Valentine's Day I was honored with a sweet verse or a bouquet from every girl in Toadville. Three widows sent me a lock of their hair. When I rode into town, a dozen boys vied with each other in being first to tie Bucephalus, while strong men held their brawny hands to catch my feet as I dropped from my saddle; and when I went to church, sweet singers urged me into the choir, as mothers in Israel piled up hymnals around me, causing me to rejoice in the luxury of greatness.

Meantime matters were not dull at Shakerag. My father's cup was running over, and occasionally his ecstasy attained such heights that he proclaimed my invention one of the signs prophecy had set apart as a forerunner of the Millennium. He had used up a gross of pencils calculating the financial value of my venture, and, after he had arrived at a conclusion, he declared that the figures were too moderate. Father said he had always seen something of the sort in me, and was expecting just such a result. I was a chip off the old block, he asserted, and inherited my inventive talent from him, since he himself once had invented a reversible toothpick, though he never had applied for a patent. Thenceforth he sought to show his appreciation of my genius, and to reward my toil, by making me sit at the foot of the table and appropriate the gizzard. I found him one sultry evening, with his

coat off, sitting on the root of a tree, figuring vehemently and talking to himself with great animation.

"Red, old boy," he said, his eyes sparkling, "how do these figures sound to people that have been living on collards and buttermilk all their days? See here. There are fifty millions of people in the United States; during the seventeen years of your patent right they will buy, on an average, one each; that will bring, at \$1.50 per screw, \$75,000,000. Then Congress, during that period, will need a million more, say \$1,500,000. Canada, Mexico, Central America, and South America will take about ten million screws, say \$15,000,000; Europe, Asia, and Africa will have to be supplied from the United States with some eighty million (for every wine-bibber and beer-drinker in Europe will want a couple), say, \$120,000,000.

"Now, Red, old boy, you see, at these moderate figures, it runs up to over \$211,000,000, leaving out Australia and all the islands of the sea. Why, boy; you can put it down at the very lowest at \$250,000,000—moderate at that, my son, very moderate—some people would write down a billion at once. Your old dad has dug his last potato, made his last corn-hill, and cut his last log of wood; and the old woman will never patch another calico this side of the moon. Silks! stove-pipes! canes! double-case gold Elgins! coach and four! mansards and broadcloth!"

Promising the old gentleman \$40,000,000, I set about to sell the right to make the Beans Revolving Corkscrew. Agents in Cincinnati, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and in fact in almost every

large city in the United States, offered their services toward effecting a sale of my article. They all claimed to know all about patent matters, and each swore all the rest were rascals—which I found afterwards to be quite true. Yet I ventured to forward \$25 to the Great Western Patent Syndicate (skindicate would be more truthful), located in Cincinnati, as a sort of feeler—and as I never heard again from said \$25, I have been feeling ever since that the villians ought to be made to drink hemp tea awhile. I next inserted a cut and advertisement of my corkscrew in a paper devoted to mechanics, and said to circulate among thirty-five thousand people. A copy of the periodical, with the advertisement marked, came in the mail one morning, filling me with supreme delight; for I felt satisfied that the invention had but to be known to meet with a prompt and splendid sale.

Next morning, before daylight, I was in Toadville awaiting the arrival of the mail, and when the letters were ready for delivery, I walked into the post office with much dignity and asked for my mail, expecting a peck of bids for my revolving corkscrew.

“Heredity Beans,” repeated the postmaster; “nothing for Mr. Beans.”

Ah! thought I, it takes time to sell great inventions. Just let a week pass, and you’ll see capitalists talking millions! And a week passed by, just as it always will if you give it time, and again I put in my appearance at Toadville to hear from parties desirous of buying the rights to deal in my corkscrew in the States and Territories. This time I was accompanied by father,

who thought it necessary to bring a large meal-sack to hold the letters.

Again the postmaster solemnly averred there were "no letters for Beans." Father sighed and turned pale, while I myself felt a little melancholy. But, said I, inaudibly, *this* corkscrew business is a big thing. Minnows can't tackle such bait; we must wait for whales. So I waited languidly two weeks longer, when the postmaster cried out laconically, "Letter for Beans." Dear man, I wanted to hug him. Father clapped his hands and seized the letter, which he insisted on carrying himself, while neither of us was willing to open the communication of millions until we reached the sacred precincts of Shakerag.

"Old boy," said father, "if this fellow offers \$20,000,000 for a State, we'll just double on him; for he's not going to offer a third of what he thinks it's worth. He's bound to have it. Why, even little Rhode Island would be dirt cheap at \$35,000,000."

We opened the letter, reading as follows:

MR. H. BEANS, INVENTOR.

Dear Sir: I will pay a dollar and a half for the right to sell your Revolving Screw in Phinx County, this State, if you will furnish the manufactured article at five cents each, express prepaid.

Respectfully,

WASHINGTON SEED.

"That's but a dodge," said I, to father. "This fellow Seed is some man of giant fortune trying to draw me out. He sees a billion or two in the thing, and is endeavoring not to commit himself."

Father said nothing, but for some cause went with-

out dinner that day, while I answered Washington as follows:

MR. W. SEED.

My dear Sir: I am glad you appreciate the merits of my corkscrew and desire to become rich and famous by connection with it. I do not sell county rights, because they would not bring more than \$20,000, and I do not care to handle such small amounts. As your State is small, I'll knock it off to you at four million. Write by return mail, or this golden opportunity may be lost forever, since I may have a dozen applications before to-morrow night.

Truly yours,

H. BEANS.

Weeks and months fled by, yet no letter came from Seed. Poor deluded noodle! I wrote inquiring for the cause of such stolid indifference to his own best interests, but Seed was blind to the allurements of fortune. I told him that, in order to get the invention started, I'd sell his State rights for \$100,000; but the fellow was insensible still. Then I made the amazing offer to sell the whole United States right for \$100,000. Still no reply. At last I invited him to suggest what he would give for the entire right or any part thereof, and the ungracious clodhopper wrote back that there was no demand for a new corkscrew. So, after weary waiting and watching and trusting for two years, I committed my model to the flames, and now I never permit the word "corkscrew" to be uttered in my presence. Father's health began to fail after the reception of Seed's letter, and "things are not what they seem"—especially patents.

Yes, dear reader, your friend Heredity Beans is of

the opinion that patents are a snare and a delusion. There never yet was a patent over which somebody didn't get swindled, somehow or other, and the only person that doesn't lose any money over them is the patent attorney. If the man who invents the invention doesn't have it stolen from him before he gets it patented the attorney robs him while he is getting it through the Patent Office. The inventor then proceeds to get square by robbing the public by making it pay for the patented article about ten times what it is actually worth.

The whole business is a gigantic swindle from start to finish, and the surest way for the ordinary mortal to go "plumb crazy" or "plumb broke" is to get a patent. The advice of Heredity Beans to all patent seekers is to burn either the model of the patent or the money the lawyer wants for getting it. Personally, I prefer the first method for the matter then is finally and thoroughly settled. Still, the latter way has its charms for those who want to live up to the axiom that a fool and his cash are soon parted. Besides, it's spectacular.

BLINDFOLDED JUSTICE

Chapter XIV.

ON a commanding pinnacle of the courthouse at Toadville stood a sufficiently accurate reproduction of the celebrated statue of Justice, in which the goddess is seen standing blindfolded, holding a pair of scales in one hand and a naked sword in the other. To a few eccentric people it may seem more appropriate for Justice, above all the gods, to have her eyes wide open, and see what's going on in this crooked world of ours; but more discerning persons readily perceive the aptness of the statue as it now stands, when they remember that the legal fraternity acts so largely upon the principle of going it blind

Still, it was of little consequence to Turnipins whether Justice could see or not. His own vision was intact, which fact he successfully demonstrated by purloining a goose on one of the darkest nights that ever swaddled Toadville. Of course, suspicion fell upon him, for like his renowned ancestor, Barabbas, he was known to be a thief and a robber; and he was arrested in consequence of the appropriated bird having been found in his possession.

The case came up one Tuesday of court week, labeled, "The State vs. Turnipins." It seemed to me, unused as I was to the idiosyncrasies of impartial, un-

adulterated, simon-pure, blindfolded Justice, that the contest was quite an unequal one, since the State with all her resources was one party, and a hump-backed rogue the other. But the delusion was dispelled when I saw the representative of Its Majesty the Commonwealth, in the person of a third-rate advocate, who had the apperance of a dandy rather than that of a gentleman of legal acumen. He seemed to have made a bandbox his boarding house, a moistened brush his chief industrial implement, while his necktie and mustache were his most honored tutelary divinities.

Withal, the same Christopher Columbus Puff was by nature invested with a series of gestures resembling the gyrations of the crank of a windlass in its last stages of usefulness, besides a voice which might have been taken for the screeching of a buggy with ungreased axles. I understood that it was usual to concede to fledgelings who could repeat with tolerable fluency the expression, "Please your Honor," the position of Commonwealth's attorney, as a sort of introduction to business; and moreover, that counselors of ripe attainments found it more lucrative to shelter vice than to expose it.

But it was rather an odd picture, I confess: a callow stripling, of mediocre parts, whose ideas of justice were about as clear as the material of which babes make mud pies, representing the honor, the integrity, the virtue, the justice of a grand old Commonwealth, while just opposite sat a dozen attorneys, representing the learning, the ability, the experience, the influence of the legal profession, to defend a rogue. Sublime travesty on justice—a little squint-eyed, pomaded

plodder, with a squeaking voice, to maintain the changeless and eternal right, and the whole legal fraternity concatenated to protect rascality. No wonder the great Hottentot poet, Hulla Balloo, exclaimed, in his splendid apostrophe to Sham, when the thermometer stood at two hundred and thirteen degrees in the shade, .

O Villainy, thou kickest up thy heels with impunity.

Turnipins having taken his seat at the bar, surrounded by a host of happy lawyers of the finest ability, the august ceremony of impaneling the jury began. Dr. Ashpole, a physician of good standing, stepped up, kissed the Bible, and swore to do his best, which would have satisfied me, at least.

“Witness,” the sheriff challenges, “look upon the prisoner; prisoner, look upon the witness; do you like him?”

“No,” the counsel for the defense answers. Exit Ashpole.

Several merchants, mechanics, and farmers were offered as jurors, but, notwithstanding their reputation for integrity, wisdom, and understanding of the law, were promptly and emphatically rejected.

Next walked up a set of individuals, led by one Bodkins, who was certain to be on hand for uncertain cases, and whose services no doubt received a certain remuneration. Bodkins kissed the Bible, and in a saintly way swore impartial justice. Now the same Bodkins had a bloated face and red nose, and a large number of unpaid accounts, which from all accounts

he never intended to pay, and withal kept a low tavern on Slime Alley, Doodle Town.

"Do you like him?" asked the sheriff.

"I love him," responded the defense, and Bodkins became a juror.

Then came Jake Garlic, a professional juror and loafer, who had long enjoyed the reputation of being the most accomplished prevaricator in Toadville.

"Do you like him?" softly and hopefully inquired the sheriff.

"I adore him," said the defense, whereupon Garlic became a juror too. So at length, by rejecting every man whose countenance indicated that he neither would steal a goose nor eat one that had been stolen, the jury was made up; and the spotless twelve took their seats to sit in judgment on Turnipins.

The bill of indictment next was read, charging the prisoner at the bar with stealing a goose; but, since in law great stress is laid upon the right use of words, the bill opened a wide field for debate. The counsel for the defense consumed no less than three days in seeking to show, by learned and lengthy arguments, that the fowl found in Turnipins' possession was not a goose at all, but a gosling, and that, in consequence, the bill was in error. Competent experts were introduced to show that the bird had not passed out of the gosling state, and the matter was finally settled by the testimony of one Whiskison, who swore that the fowl could not be a goose until it had teeth.

The case, having been dismissed on this account, came up at the next term of the court, the indictment clerk substituting gosling for goose. The defense re-

quired only two days and a half this time to prove that the bill was again improperly drawn, since the bird was not a gosling, as all might plainly see, but a grown fowl.

The Commonwealth's attorney, Mr. Puff, in reply, puffed away eight hours to destroy the arguments adduced by the opposition; and, when he proved conclusively that the bird had no teeth, and was hence, by Whiskison's own previous testimony, a gosling, he seemed to be sailing on prosperous waters. But the defense quickly swore the said Whiskison again, and by him showed convincingly that the goose once had possessed teeth, but, owing to long confinement and grief, had lost them, the witness testifying that he frequently had known such cases. As the bill of indictment was demonstrated to be incorrectly worded, using gosling where it should have used goose, there, of course, was no trial, and the prisoner was released until the indictment mill could get to work again.

Next term of the court, Turnipins was again on hand, charged with stealing a goose. The prosecuting attorney, deeming himself now master of the situation, stroked his mustache complacently, as a man who had but to crack the whip of argument and drive the chariot of Justice triumphantly along the serpentine paths of law. But the opposing counsel set to work at once to demolish a third time the unfortunate bill, and in an argument lasting two days proved that the fowl alleged to have been stolen was not a goose, but a gander.

Puff, however, having a good constitution, bore his legal reverses manfully, and resolved to try his hand

once more on the preparation of a bill that would go through. Accordingly Turnipins sat before the judge at the next term of court, indicted for stealing a "bird of the feathered tribe, called in common parlance a gander, which term denoted a fowl of the masculine gender." The lovers of justice, and particularly the loser of the goose, congratulated Puff on the strong wording of the bill, and all hands looked for a speedy trial and a glorious justification of justice.

After the reading of the indictment, the counsel for the defense labored a week to demonstrate that the fowl in question was not a gander, but a capon. This having been pretty well established, a new indictment seemed inevitable, but the judge came to the Commonwealth's relief by ruling that a gander and a capon were sufficiently allied to admit of the prosecution of the case under the bill. So, after the lapse of four years, the State was prepared to prosecute the notorious poultry thief.

Attorney Puff presented to the jury in behalf of the Commonwealth the following cogent arguments: 1. The innkeeper, the party from whom the goose had been purchased, and the hotel cook, identified the fowl found with Turnipins. 2. Turnipins did not raise geese, and reliable witnesses would testify that up to the time of the theft he had no goose of any sort on the premises. 3. On the night of the theft, Turnipins was seen in the back yard of the hotel, but did not report himself as on any business; and on the same night a neighbor saw him with a goose. 4. Turnipins' wife would say her husband told her he got the goose from the innkeeper. 5. Turnipins, when arrested, denied

having any goose on the place notwithstanding the goose was in the coop.

The testimony on which the solicitor based his arguments seemed conclusive when it was delivered until the defense, consisting of a dozen of the most astute lawyers in the State, began to sift it. Nobody knows how a case in court will go until, obedient to the maxim, "*Audi alteram partem*," he has heard both sides, top and bottom, and then, if the matter hinges on the verdict of a jury, it would be just as fair and expeditious to shut both eyes and draw straws.

The counsel for the defense at last arose and, in a bland, seductive manner addressed the immaculate twelve.

"Gentlemen of the jury," said he, gazing fondly at them; "we esteem it the happiest privilege of our life to address so intelligent and respectable a body of men. Had the thronging multitudes of the spacious earth been sifted, twelve more worthy, honorable, and patriotic gentlemen could not have been found. And gentlemen, you are this day called upon to administer to a fellow-being in distress impartial justice, and thus to exercise the proudest prerogative of an American citizen.

"As we look into your benevolent faces, and discover playing there emotions welling up from hearts of compassion, we feel safe in asserting that there is not a man among you that would so transform himself into a brute as to convict, on such evidence, this innocent man who sits sobbing at our side. Gentlemen, this injured, maligned, persecuted man, appears before you to-day to face in open court his enemies,



"THE COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENSE AROSE, AND IN A BLAND, SEDUCTIVE MANNER ADDRESSED
THE IMMACULATE TWELVE."

displaying the fortitude of a martyr and the magnanimity of an angel. You do not see him dodging in fence corners or fleeing to the trackless forests. No, gentlemen; he comes with the boldness of a hero to beard the lion in his den.

"See, sirs, what conscious innocence mantles the countenance of the prisoner at the bar! Why, gentlemen, he cannot even look you in the face because he feels so keenly the magnitude of his reproach. But, gentlemen, as the morning dew vanishes before the rising splendor of the sun, so will the mists of slander and suspicion be dispelled from the character of the prisoner, as incontrovertible evidence pours from a cloudless record its bright floods of light upon his stainless history. And, gentlemen, our noble and beautiful women indorse, as you see, the prisoner at the bar. [Holds up a dozen nosebags sent by some male women.]

"If it please the Court, we shall present the following arguments to this most honorable jury: Now, gentlemen, we are going to show conclusively that previous to the stealing charged against the prisoner, no gander ever had occupied the innkeeper's coop; and in proof of this crushing fact, we introduce a box of feathers carefully collected from the said coop the morning after the alleged theft. The last feather was raked up, and, gentlemen, here they are; examine them for yourselves. See, gentlemen, here are hen feathers, rooster feathers, duck feathers, drake feathers, guinea feathers, turkey feathers, but not a single gander feather! [Here several jurors hold up goose feathers.]

"Yes, gentlemen, well, er, yes—oh!—you see, gentlemen, that is a fact I intended to bring out since it sets the capstone on the brow of my argument. Those are indeed goose feathers, but you remember, gentlemen, that this case involves not a goose but a gander.

"Now, sirs, we have shown triumphantly, that there is not a gander feather in the lot—not one! But is it possible, gentlemen of the jury, that a gander should have been kept in a hotel coop, under circumstances so favorable for molting, without shedding a single feather? No, gentlemen, never has an instance been recorded in history, sacred or profane, since the first gosling stood on one foot and with upturned eye gazed contemplatively on the eternal sun, of a gander's passing two weeks of its history in a hotel coop without shedding a single feather! No wonder you smile.

"Gentlemen, you have heard it stated here that the prisoner did not raise geese. No; and for that very reason he bought one, as any prudent man would do, to fatten for Thanksgiving. And has it come to pass in this free land, that, if a man does not raise geese, he can't buy any? Gentlemen, the innkeeper does not raise geese, and according to the State's own argument, if he ever owned the bird in dispute, he must have stolen it! And when you render your righteous verdict, if it should appear to your unbiased minds that this gander was the property of the innkeeper, you will be forced to give sentence that he stole it!

"And, gentlemen of the jury [looking quizzically], the State avers in open court that, on the night of the alleged theft, the prisoner at the bar was seen in the hotel yard. My fellow-countrymen, does the Com-

monwealth's attorney expect twelve rational men to swallow such diluted logic? Has the State been reduced to such a strait as to hinge its case upon so apparent a fallacy? Gentlemen, haven't all of you been in the hotel yard within the last twenty-four hours? Did you steal a goose? Eh?

"And, gentlemen, His Honor has been seen in the hotel yard at night—would he soil his immaculate ermine by purloining a goose? Gentlemen, the hotel is a public place, and there is no custom requiring a visitor to report his business; and yet, the State charges against the prisoner at the bar that he did not report himself as on any business!

"But, gentlemen, in order to convince you of the honest intentions of the prisoner, it behooves us to explain his presence in the back yard of the hotel. Gentlemen, every man that wants to sell a fowl repairs first to the hotel to dispose of it, especially if his bird is an antiquated rooster or gander. Now, the prisoner, having bought the gander, which proved, by reason of years, to be unsuited to his mother-in-law's mastication, as a dutiful son hastened to the innkeeper to sell it, but finding that they could not agree on the terms, he carried his valuable capon back home. And one of the neighbors testified, you remember, that he saw the prisoner that night with the goose. See, gentlemen, how this unimpeachable witness, upon whom the State so largely depends, goes to corroborate the statement we have made?

"The State insisted that the prisoner was seen in the back yard of the hotel. Now, gentlemen, if you wanted to sell a goose at a hotel, would you go swag-

gering into the front yard, to the annoyance of the guests, or quietly enter the back yard, where business like yours is commonly dispatched? Ah! the prosecution has unwittingly demonstrated the niceties and proprieties of the prisoner's life. Why, gentlemen, the refinements of poesy scarcely afford an instance of more delicate or fastidious taste. But he did not report himself as on any business, argues the State.

"As a matter of fact, gentlemen, the prisoner's ostensible business was to sell his gander, but his real purpose in visiting the hotel was to make love to the cook. My fellow-countrymen, do you wonder that he loitered about the hotel until a late hour? Didn't you hang about your sweetheart's premises until the small hours, gentlemen? Of course you did; and so did our most honorable judge. Yet, gentlemen, did you call up the family and report your business? But, should you decide this case against the prisoner, you may, gentlemen, in your old age, be charged with stealing a goose, because you didn't report yourselves as courting. Yes, gentlemen, if a fellow on so tender an errand is obliged by law to report his business, there will soon be no such business to report; while, per consequence, our daughters will die old maids, and our young men will migrate to a land of better laws. But especially [lowering his voice] would such a statute be cruel in the case of our friend, the prisoner, who happened, at the time of the charge, to be a widower of six weeks' standing.

"The attorney for the State flaunts into your faces the confident assertion that Turnipins' wife testified that her husband told her he got the goose from the

innkeeper. See, gentlemen, the reckless statements the State feels compelled to make! Why, sirs, this lady who gave her testimony so innocently and clearly, is the prisoner's mother-in-law! You discover, gentlemen, that the State has not made very thorough investigation, or else is prosecuting a fictitious criminal. If you decide this case against the prisoner, you will have to demand proof as to his having a wife; but as he has no wife, and the village undertaker can satisfy you on that point, you are forced to regard the subject of the prosecution as a married man.

"But, gentlemen, Turnipins' mother-in-law did say that the prisoner got the goose from the innkeeper. Yes, gentlemen of the jury, this saintly woman, seeing that the avaricious innkeeper tried to get the goose from her son-in-law for a bare trifle, a mere song, and that her resolute son-in-law had snatched from the niggardly hands of the innkeeper the noble fowl, shouted in her joy and satisfaction that he got the goose from the innkeeper. Gentlemen, do you blame the prisoner for getting his goose? If some sharp rogue should try to cheat you out of your property, wouldn't you get it and take it home? Is it right, gentlemen jurors, for a man to let an accomplished villain step up and confiscate his just earnings, his lawful property? No, gentlemen, it is not right; and as sons of a free soil, you are bound to uphold the brave man who dares to humble the bold oppressor.

"Gentlemen, don't your hearts burn within you, as you look upon this poor prisoner, persecuted, despised, robbed, slandered, by the prosperous but wicked innkeeper? Gentlemen, it is a case of the rich against the

poor. This purse-proud and base innkeeper thinks he has only to put forth his murderous hand, and throttle the poor but honorable prisoner at the bar, because he ventured to set his own price on his fowl, and displayed such glorious heroism that generations yet unborn will never tire of hearing it. Yes, gentlemen, he got the goose. Sheriff, bring that gander here. Don't you see, my countrymen, he got him? This is the very goose the prisoner had fattened, and petted, and loved. This tender old mother-in-law had become attached to the noble bird, only to see it taken from her home.

"Gentlemen, have these aged and flowing eyes no arguments for you? But, gentlemen, more than this—and if ye have tears, prepare to shed them now—do you see these motherless children with no loving hand to caress their brow, no soft lips to kiss their little cheeks, no kind voice like a mother's to speak peace to their little hearts? Well, gentlemen, these are the children, that, in the absence of a mother, who is now pleading from a better world, for you to do them justice, had made this dear bird a companion and friend. And yet, this ingrate, this human monster, the innkeeper, would plunder a band of orphans, and take from them the sympathetic goose that so largely filled a mother's place. [Several jurors wept.]

"The counsel for the State alleges that the prisoner, when arrested, denied having a goose on the premises, notwithstanding the bird was found in his coop. Now, gentlemen, notice another glaring misstatement of the prosecution. This coop did not belong to the prisoner at all, but was the property of his mother-in-law, as I can prove by forty competent witnesses. You

are called upon by the prosecution, sirs, as honest men, to swallow such bald fallacies. Gentlemen, it never has been proved, nor can it ever be, that the prisoner had a coop.

“Moreover, gentlemen, much stress is laid upon the fact that the prisoner at the bar denied having a goose on the premises. How low indeed a cause must have sunk to require such an argument to support it! Why, gentlemen, don’t you see that the innkeeper had just attempted to rob the prisoner of his fowl, and when a posse of armed men came upon him unawares, suspecting them too to be robbers, he denied he had a goose on the premises? If they had demanded potatoes, he would have sworn that he had no potatoes on the premises; yet, everybody knows he raised potatoes, and here is [holding up a tremendous yam] a splendid specimen, which three hundred witnesses can testify grew on his premises. If a band of armed men you took to be robbers should suddenly come upon you, demanding your most prized property, wouldn’t you deny you had such property? Certainly.

“Now, gentlemen, only one point remains to be elucidated. The prosecuting attorney wants to know what possible motive the innkeeper could have in bringing the charge of theft against an innocent man. Why, gentlemen, it’s as clear as the noonday sun. The innkeeper, seeing that Turnipins was an industrious and sprightly widower, just the man to captivate a first-class cook, rather than lose his cook, and through her his custom, took occasion from the prisoner’s visit to charge upon him this miserable theft. Don’t you see, gentlemen? Now, gentlemen jurors, we leave

this case in your sovereign hands, satisfied of a righteous verdict. *Justitia fiat, coelum ruat!*" [But the jury didn't know what that meant.]

The august twelve retired to make up its verdict. John Toothache said that according to the evidence the innkeeper stole the goose. Tom Ashes thought the innkeeper stole Turnipins' mother-in-law. Phil Shingles thought Turnipins stole the hotel cook. Silas Lowboots didn't feel exactly sure whether the defendant was the judge, Commonwealth's attorney, Turnipins, the innkeeper, Turnipins' mother-in-law, or the goose; that's what he said bothered him. It was reserved for the astute Bodkins to direct the jury's mind.

"Boys," said he, "thar ain't no use in wastin' time over trifles nohow; and more'n that, the evidence is mightily mixed, and 'taint our business to unmix it. Turnipins is a good fellow, and I fer one say let's clear him. We may be in his fix some day ourselves."

"That's what I say, too," ejaculated Garlic, and the remainder of the immaculate custodians of justice shouted "Amen!"

The case had already cost the State \$758, and was about to be appealed to the Supreme Court, to cost more, when from excessive age the goose died, thus ending its sublunar trials; and the innkeeper, no longer able to gorge the stomachs of a host of legal hyenas, was compelled to stop the suit. Toadville whispered, "There's nothing more glorious on the face of the earth than the American jury system—for lawyers and rascals."

INNOCENCE ABOARD

Chapter XV.

ABOUT this time and while still I was pondering what my mission in life was to be I determined to see a little of the world, thinking that to travel and to see the big cities would increase my store of knowledge and wisdom and aid me in choosing a profession. The city I first chose was Philadelphia, because there a noted spiritualist was giving a nightly *séance* and I wanted to observe the nature of the crowds he was drawing as well as to measure the man himself.

There always has been in our world a class of people that know more than anybody else about what the wisest men have pronounced unknowable. Still there are persons who desire to know these things, and they can readily find other persons who will undertake to reveal them for the consideration of a few dollars. If the unknowable can be revealed, of course it ought to be paid for. The present dispenser of the unknown was attracting unusual attention throughout the country as a revealer of secrets and a master of the "black art." In his chosen profession, he was unsurpassed in the United States, and perhaps in the world. I do not intend any reflection upon the magicians of the old country by this broad assertion; and should any transatlantic wizards feel hurt, they will please

mollify their grief by remembering that I have never traveled extensively, and know more about collards than witches. This noted man, of course, I must see, and to that end I coaxed Bucephalus to bear me with average speed over a four days' journey to the City of Brotherly Love.

As I rode along one of the leading streets of Philadelphia, having never before visited a city, I thought it comported with the dignity of a gentleman from the country, and was also due the people among whom I had come, to sit my animal with becoming grace, that I might bring no reproach upon either my ancestry or my mule, naturally presuming that my advent would create considerable stir. I summoned all the dignity and grace at my command. I wore a broad-brimmed straw hat, which served both as chapeau and umbrella; my pants, for the sake of protection, were stuffed into my red-topped boots, and I had on a homespun coat, constructed after the manner of a jacket—the uncultured would have called it a jacket—on the lapel of which drooped a wilted sunflower surrounded by a constellation of morning-glories [whose glory had departed] sacredly pinned there by the fair hand of Polytechnic Campbell.

Now and then, as I glanced up to mark what impression I was making on my countrymen, just as any fair-minded man will do, I read in the faces of a number of observers, chiefly loafers and newsboys, that the sentiment obtained that I was the prophet Jonah, late passenger of the Whale, but now freighted with a message of doom. As I proceeded, however—Bucephalus shying first to the left and then to the right,

and bringing his ears to a quizzical horizontal at every street-car that passed—others seemed to take me for an impersonation of the seer Balaam, especially when my beast straddled the track, and brought to an unceremonious halt a funeral procession, which he entertained with a long and hearty bray.

Bucephalus, like his master, unused to the “din and turmoil of the world,” not readily adapting himself to the situation, and refusing to be governed by those equitable laws to which all flesh should render obedience, was elevated bodily by a quaternion [I hope this word drives you to the Dictionary] of rotund policemen, and transported half a square to a location that, by reason of greater room, offered him enlarged facilities for exhibiting himself. After a protracted and rather unpleasant pause there, he reluctantly consented to accompany me, and I led him in deep humiliation through the great highways of the second city of America, his head assuming a perpendicular and my right arm well-nigh dislocated, until finally I came to a stand in front of the hotel at which I intended to stay. An Irish porter came out to relieve me of the animal—but I never learned who relieved the porter. I only know that Pat was missing from his post of duty next day, and the morning paper stated that he would probably be a guest at the Sawbones Hospital a fortnight or so—that mule of mine never was reliable.

When tea was ready, with characteristic promptness I was on hand. A gentleman with a soft Italian accent and robed in spotless linen, came gracefully up behind my chair and, in a voice of perfect melody, ad-

dressed me in a most courteous and lordly style. I, of course, as any well-bred man would do, politely arose, shook his hand in a most friendly way, inquired after his family, and cordially invited him to sit down. I was about to unfold my mission in visiting Philadelphia, when, with a superb smile, the waiter (for such this individual was) asked my orders, enabling me to detect the mistake I had made—which was due to the fact that I never before had been served by persons of light complexion.

The Italian placed the bill of fare before me, to assist me in making an intelligent choice; but not understanding foreign tongues (though I had a diploma in modern languages from Sheepskin College) I put it aside and called for coffee, scrambled eggs, beans, potatoes, pork, and collards and then I actually had to explain what collards were. When a person gets beyond this assortment his taste has become vitiated. I was getting along finely until I emptied what seemed to be half a cruet of clear, beautiful-looking vinegar over my collards, and spoiled them. This is a sort of vinegar I hope never to encounter again—they call it in the bill of fare *huile d'olive*, which in English means olive oil.

After tea I retired in order that I might be prepared for the labors of the morrow. On entering my room, I sat motionless for some minutes, watching the brilliant jet of gas, which was a novelty to me—there being no gas in Doodle Town. After a while, just as I had always done, I blew out the light and resigned myself to the joys of somnolence, when I suddenly discovered that the atmosphere had become charged

with a most offensive odor. With the presence of mind that ever should characterize a traveler, I opened my door and called for a committee of consultation. A servant was soon at my side asking if I had turned off the gas. I demanded an explanation of this seeming impertinence, and was satisfied only when he had relighted the gas and turned it off. I dismissed him with the suggestive remark that a hotel of such pretensions should have a sort of gas that could be blown out.

About midnight I heard an alarm of fire. In the quiet land of my boyhood such alarms were rare, but never failed to arouse the neighborhood. He that did not promptly rush with a bucket of water to the scene of the conflagration, and render all the help in his power, was recorded in the annals of society as an unworthy citizen. Accordingly, my nerves stretched to their utmost tension, and in wild excitement, I darted, as an arrow shot from an effective bow, down three flights of stairs, screaming at the top of my voice, "Fire! fire! fire!" As I sped down the street, I warned the city of its danger, in spite of a gang of unmannerly policemen who sought to discourage me with disrespectful epithets. Nevertheless, I hurried on in the direction of the noise, with the pitcher of water I had seized in starting, and arrived at length at the scene of the fire—a candy stand, that had been set ablaze. As I found a couple of engines—there are no engines in Toadville—extinguishing the last spark, I shouted, "The city is safe!" and returned to my bed with a clear conscience. It is a great satisfaction to think you have saved a city.



"I . . . ARRIVED AT LENGTH AT THE SCENE OF THE FIRE."

actly. It makes you look like a yoong shentleman from de city, very much," concluded the mercantile prince, slapping me on the back to indicate the perfect fit of the suit.

I made an effort to doff the apparel, but he affectionately patted my shoulder, saying it would never do.

"Keep dem clothes and takes 'em home wid you. I intends you must shoost have dem clothes," said he.

Thus when I discovered that in a most delicate way he was making me a present—this stranger on whom I had no claim—my emotional nature was touched, and utterance failed me. At length I controlled my feelings enough to say, "How very kind you are, sir."

He carried me out next to wilderness of boxes, as-severating that I must have a dozen of those glossy French shirts and as many collars. "Now you takes your pick," commanded my benefactor, when we reached the shirts.

"My dear sir," urged I, modestly, "please excuse me. I should prefer not being placed under further obligation. I am sure it is very generous, but it is enough."

"No! no! never do. Dem shirts must go wid dem clothes." And he wrapped them up, throwing in a necktie.

"Now," continued the Israelite, who seemed to be having matters his own way; "you must shoost put on a pair of dem fashionable morocco poots, which suits you oxactly."

The boots were soon on my feet, some four sizes too large, but he said they fitted me perfectly, and summoned several of his clerks, who swore to the

same thing. Inasmuch as I was a beneficiary I, of course, offered no difference of opinion.

"Now," insisted the descendant of Jacob, "I'm ish goin' to give you one of de finest peavers in mine store." And he set a stovepipe hat on my head, assuring me that such was the fashion "wid resbeetible beobles."

Seeing he would take no denial, I made no further attempt to refuse his bestowments, but my heart was full, and sometimes the falling tear told of the struggle within.

"Now, mine friend, would you like something else besides?"

"My dear sir, no! Your bounty already has overcome me. Please mention nothing else."

In spite of me, however, he thrust a handsome cane at me with an exquisite smile. I smiled too. Why should I not smile? I fancied my first visit to Polytechnic in my new suit. What admiration, too, would I excite in the mind of Mrs. Campbell! Yes, I smiled; in fact I did it several times.

While thus reflecting, I grasped the liberal hand of my benefactor, inviting him to my wedding when it came off, and promising to bring Bucephalus round next day for him to look at. Pressing his hand most tenderly, the grateful tears starting in my eyes, as I said faintly, yet with deep emotion, "Good-by!" I started for the door.

"Stops, mine frient, and I makes out dat little pill."

"Oh! thank you, my friend, how very thoughtful you are! But I do not need a pill to-day. My health is perfect, but I shall ever remember with gratitude

your fatherly care. Your kindness to me, a stranger, is overwhelming."

"Put dat money pill I must give you. Dat's vot I mean."

"My kind friend, you really must excuse me. I don't want to appear rude, but you have done so much for me already that I cannot take money in any form from you. I am sure, sir, that if there is any medicine in the world that would help me, it would be a money pill; but please pardon me now."

"You don't understand pusiness, I dinks. I mean p-i-double l. Dat's vot I says."

"I understand you perfectly, my friend. You are quite correct; that spells pill."

"Den I writes it for you." Hands me a slip of paper.

"What bill?" inquired I, gravely.

"Dem goots shoost makes fifty-one tollar oxactly."

"What, sir? I have bought nothing. You forced the articles on me, under appearance of benefactions; and now, sir, do you have the face to demand remuneration? Are you so great a slave to filthy lucre that you obtain it by a trick, under color of beneficence? Why, sir, I never saw half of fifty-one dollars at one time in my life!"

"Den you takes off dem goots and leaves 'em here. I don't do pusiness on dat way. I sells goots for demonish."

I stripped off my apparel and, after swapping appropriate words of counsel, moved down the street apace, pondering upon tricks of commercial life.

"Do you know where Sim Jones lives?" inquired I

of a portly gentleman I met on Chestnut Street. He said he didn't know him. I made no reply, but thought it quite marvelous that there should be anybody in Philadelphia that did not know Sim Jones. I had no acquaintance with Sim myself, but as father once received a circular from him, claiming to offer a sure cure for hog cholera, I judged he would like to see me, though I did not have that disease.

I sauntered leisurely on, bowing politely to everybody I met, waxing wiser every moment, until I came to a photograph gallery, which reminded me of a promise to Mrs. Campbell to have my picture taken for her. That Mrs. C. should be so anxious for my photograph tickled me no little. The widow thinks sights of me now, thought I. If she could only have seen me in that suit of tights—and I sighed.

"What sort of picture do you want?" asked the artist.

"Well, just give me a general good picture—not too strikingly like me—say, something that will suggest the seven wise men."

"I presume, of course, you prefer vignette style."

"What? Vignette? Well, yes; I never had a likeness of me, but I reckon that will do. Only let it be full length." He smiled, seeing I knew all about it.

"What size do you wish, sir?"

"Well, you may make it about the size of George Washington. You can leave old Wash's horse out if you like."

"Such pictures are very costly, sir. Most persons prefer small busts, as cheaper and more convenient. How many shall I take?"

"I suppose about two hundred of the smaller size will do, as I have a great many friends, and Mrs. Campbell will want a dozen or so."

The delighted artist swung a chair into one corner of the room, knocked me down upon it, twisted my legs into positions of grace, threw my arms into a sort of a festoon, screwed my head back into an apparatus for the purpose, and bade me neither move, nor wink, nor speak. He then rolled out his camera and was taking deliberate aim at me when I jumped up and told him I did not care to have any man point a cannon at me, even in jest. He declared it was "all right," and I resumed my seat, only indicating that I did not want anything serious to happen, as I was some distance from home. The negative was soon taken, and I was happy the rest of the day.

I saw nothing more to interest me, except a squad of females, who, I was told, were "sisters of Charity." They seemed to be anticipating rain, and were under their tents. The Charity family must be quite numerous, and all females. I asked if Miss Charity had any brothers, but no one could give the desired information. Having nothing else to do, I followed a hand-organ round several streets to watch the monkey dance, and then returned to my hotel, a wearier, but a wiser man.

What a sad and swindling world this is, I pondered, in the solitude of my apartment in the hotel. I had gone abroad in Philadelphia and thought I had met a good Samaritan. He had seemed to be a man who lived up to the fact that he was a resident of the City of Brotherly Love, and I had thought to go back to

Toadville and Shakerag and tell my friends of the generosity I had encountered. And all that I had to narrate of the adventure was the fact that some one had tried to swindle me.

But, I concluded, after having viewed the situation from all points, no one else will try to cheat me. I have had my experience and I guess I shall be able now to get through with my visit and go back home without any further mishap.

But I reckoned without my host, as will be disclosed later on.

AMONG THE WITCHES

Chapter XVI.

ABOUT eight o'clock in the evening, after a long pondering upon the Israelitish character, I was comfortably seated in the Quaker City's opera house, waiting for the curtain to rise upon the *séance* of the spiritualist I had come so far to see. Outside I had bought one of the leading daily papers and while perusing it came across the following in the shape of a double-leaded editorial:

DIVES, THE INIMITABLE SEER.

Professor Dives, who is now visiting this city, is the phenomenon of modern times, and the most skillful spiritual medium ever known. His marvelous revelations, his wonderful prophecies, and his power to hold communication with the spirit world seem scarcely short of miraculous. He lays open, with startling accuracy, the secrets of the past, present, and future. Events long forgotten he recalls; mysteries inscrutable he solves with the readiness of a magician. He reproduces the dead in shadowy form, exhibits their pictures, and as a spiritual postman delivers their letters. He seems, indeed, to be a favorite with the departed, and evinces the ability to summon them at will. His name is a household word in every intelligent home, while his fame is commensurate with civilization. Everybody should go to hear him.

The editor, of course, got pay for this puff, in the ratio of its remissness to veracity, but at the time I
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took it to be solid fact, and not a financial job. Having spent my youth on a country farm, I had neither seen much of the great ones of the earth, nor even heard of their existence. I think, however, I heard my father on one occasion speak approvingly of George Washington. My intense, stolid, inexcusable ignorance of Professor Dives caused me acute pains of mortification, or if that wasn't it, it was the stupendous supper I had eaten. Especially was I grieved when I thus learned from the editorial that Dives was one of the most conspicuous figures in our earth's history—more gifted than Moses, wiser than Solomon, and greater than Paul. Poor David! he said his child could not come to him, but Professor Dives can bring back David's child or anybody's. Poor old David! he sure was behind the times. I began to realize the disadvantage of having been born in the backwoods, and was consoled only after drawing up a resolution that I'd never be born there again; and I never have been.

It was while musing thus that a great gratification suddenly came upon me. I discovered that my attitude of deep and intense thought, together with my naturally distinguished mien and air of ripe scholarship and deep erudition, had made me the center of the audience's attraction and that at least two hundred opera glasses were turned upon me. With great pains and complacency I bowed to each adoring inspector, and, under a strong sense of duty, was about to rise and address the crowd, since evidently something was expected of me, when the spiritualist appeared on the stage, and I was compelled to forego my speech. It is possible that some thought I was the wizard.

Suddenly the gas was turned off, and the great audience was wrapped in a mantle of thick darkness, with which a little ray of light seemed to frolic now and then. The spirits appeared to love darkness rather than light; at all events, it is just a degree peculiar that they generally prefer to prowl about in the night. This is the stranger, too, when some of them claim to come from unobscured and eternal light. I confess this fact seemed to be a little to the prejudice of the better class of ghosts, but I withheld judgment.

Many persons in the audience received touching messages from deceased relatives, and were variously affected. Wives heard from their dead husbands, and sniffled enough to make it respectable; husbands heard from departed wives, and stood it heroically; friends heard from deceased friends, and were amused.

After a while, Professor Dives, moving mysteriously amidst a few dim rays that made a feeble attempt to illumine the stage and were just enough to impart a sickly and lonesome appearance to things, announced in a ventriloquial whisper that an old lady had come up, and desired to speak with her grandson from the country.

Now it was safe to suppose that there were at least two hundred grandsons from the country present, and just as safe to suppose that all of them had, at the lowest calculation, one grandmother presumed to be in glory, while many of them had a couple of such. Unfortunately, I was not at the time impressed with this fact, and a sense of family pride urged me to claim the old lady. It nevertheless seemed to me somewhat odd that my venerable ancestor should make me ride

hundreds of miles, pay hotel charges, and buy an admission ticket, before she would favor me with a few remarks. So I resolved to speak to the spirit.

"Grandma, is that you?" I said, in a tremulous voice, for I was on the verge of having a fit.

"It is, my son," was the cavernous reply.

Whew! thought I. This diction ill comports with the earthly speech of my venerable ancestor, for invariably to such interrogation she replied, "Hit's me, Red." But then, in the shadow world, grammar may be more generally applied than here.

"Is it well with you, grandmother?" I asked.

"It is well, my son; I rejoice in perpetual youth and inexpressible felicity."

It struck my carnal mind that, had I a home in so happy a world, I would have remained there instead of gadding about on a starless night. But there is no accounting for tastes, and my deceased relative did, while an earthly resident, take strange turns occasionally. I deemed it best, however, before receiving the communication of my aged ancestor had in store for me, to ask for a proof of her identity. The professor informed me that she would write her name for me. This was the straw that broke the camel's back.

"Sir," said I, in a sepulchral tone of voice that I think scared some of the visitant ghosts away, "Sir, my sainted ancestor devoted her days to raising chickens and running a spinning-jenny, and, though I make the acknowledgment with blushes, it is due her cherished memory that I state the fact that she never wrote her name or anything else in her life. Now, sir, I am sure my grandmother would not claim accomplish-

ments she never possessed, much less to enter into a deliberate trick to impose on the credulity of her grandson; and I insist that this ungenerous and uncalled-for imputation of wickedness at once be removed."

I think several more ghosts left as I uttered these menacing words; at any rate considerable excitement prevailed in the audience. After an awkward pause, the wizard announced that my grandmother would appear on the platform "materialized." The lights were turned a little lower and the hall was made a little darker, in order that the old lady might appear to advantage, I presume. Before her demise she wore spectacles, and then had to be led after twilight, but possibly her sight had improved, and the darkness was congenial. At all events it was her prerogative to select her time of peregrination.

After the lapse of about ten minutes, she hobbled forth into the somber glimmer of the stage, arrayed in fantastic robes and shrouded in veils, the very impersonation of a ghost that moved in the upper circles of Hades. The scene was imposing—very imposing; my heart was touched; and my pride was aroused. If this is my dear old grandmother, reasoned I, it becomes me to do the affectionate thing, and welcome her most heartily after so long an absence. So I rushed frantically on the stage, and clasped the returned ancestor in my emphatic embrace, as an exhibition of that reverence due a relative who has been in the spirit-land fifteen years. The lights were immediately turned on, and revealed an audience standing on tiptoe, gazing upon a captured ghost.



"THE LIGHTS WERE IMMEDIATELY TURNED ON AND REVEALED AN AUDIENCE STANDING ON TIPTOE, GAZING UPON A CAPTURED GHOST."

But behold! in the presence of the vast assemblage of curious spectators, to my great mortification, my venerable grandparent came to pieces. The old lady at first screamed, next raved, and finally fought like a wild-cat. Her wig flew off in the scuffle, while her veils and airy trimmings became scattered promiscuously—"some flew east, and some flew west, and some flew over the cuckoo's nest." I sought to pacify the "materialized" spirit, but met with no marked success, and so, after due acknowledgments and entreaties on the part of Professor Dives, who had ventured timidly on the stage, I turned the witch over to him as his wife. This little episode revealed behind the scenes a barrel or so of old wigs, false hair, switches, false beards, besides several boxes of other precious materials to "materialize" the immortal phantoms of another world.

The *séance* ended somewhat abruptly, as you can imagine, and the professor canceled his date for the next night because of a previous engagement which he suddenly discovered.

The more I have thought on the subject of spiritualism the more thoroughly I am convinced that it is the culminating humbug and most unmitigated superstition of the age. And here let me say that I am in deadly earnest. Thousands of people receive as absolute truth the vague mutterings of men who play tricks in the dark and make their living by the most miserable type of lying. Spiritualism has never done a good thing, while the name of its evils is legion. It has blasted the nervous systems, upset the minds, and chilled the hearts of many thousands. It is a cruel

fraud that, under the pretense of "spiritual affinities," seeks to disparage marital affinities and smother the home. It is the religion of cranks and the creed of fools. It destroys whatever it falls upon mentally, morally, and often physically.

And the spirits that are reputed to come from a world of glory are a magnificent set of chuckleheads. They break through the confines of eternity to talk a string of nonsense to credulous noodles. Not one has ever spoken sense enough to justify an obituary of a deceased tumblebug. Judging from the character of the returned spirits' writing, spelling, communications, and appearance, they need in Hades a milliner, a schoolteacher, and a missionary; for they have evidently degenerated into a race of buffoons. The whole thing is an absurd imposture, and should be crushed under the stern heel of the law, as an enterprise to obtain filthy lucre by filthier slanders on the characters of the just made perfect.

Concluding I had reached the ends of the earth and had acquired as much information as I could well digest in a couple of years, I turned my thoughts toward Shakerag, which lay in the vicinity of Coon Hollow. To home I would direct my steps.

PAYING THE HOTEL BILL

Chapter XVII.

My experiences in Philadelphia were about to end when an uncomfortable crisis presented itself, which I proceed to chronicle, since it contains much food for reflection.

On the morning after the *séance* I walked up to the desk in the office of the hotel in which I stopped, took out my pocketbook, containing just \$2.25, and demanded to know the extent of my indebtedness.

"Your bill is just thirty dollars," said the clerk, with a professional smile.

"Thirty mud-puddles!" gasped I, clutching the counter to keep from suddenly assuming an undignified position, so great was my surprise.

"The amount is correct, sir; just thirty dollars," insisted the man behind the counter, with some astonishment.

"Mr. Clerk," said I, when I had recovered my resolution; "your intentions may be good, but it is painfully evident that you have never drunk deeply from the fountains of wisdom, nor have your travels been extensive. Why, sir, in Toadville I could get board and lodging for twenty-five cents per day, and in this great city, where provisions are so plentiful, I should think fifteen cents an exorbitant sum."

I began to cast about me for a means of making money. Stepping out on the street to hunt for some employment which would enable me to make an honorable settlement I spied the following advertisement of a wholesale grocery, printed in all colors of the rainbow on a huge sheet of canvas:

ENORMOUS BARGAINS

PRICES SMASHED.

GOODS MUST BE SOLD.

KETCHAM & CHEATHAM GROCERY CO.

Because we need the room for new and fresh stock we are selling the following goods at the accompanying unheard-of prices. Besides, we are going to move to our new building sometime and don't want to carry stock over. This is no fire sale, but a bona fide bargain. Come in and see the wonderful bargains named below.

50,000 lbs. side meat.....	7 cts.
2,000 hams.....	14 cts.
200 kegs lard.....	11 cts.
300 sacks salt.....	\$1.25.
275 boxes cheese.....	12 cts.
800 cans fruit.....	10 cts.
700 hogsheads sugar.....	8 cts.
1,500 sacks coffee.....	16¾ cts.
1,000 bbls. flour.....	\$5.50.
40,000 salt fish.....	7 cts.
1,000 kegs rice.....	6 cts.
8,000 sacks oats.....	37½ cts.
40 coops chickens.....	30 cts.
280 geese.....	8½ cts.
Car-load of hay.....	60 cts.
Boat-load of watermelons.....	15 cts.

Wonderful, thought I, gazing at the sign and vainly racking my brains to find some more lucid explanation for such truly remarkable bargains. Certainly no Toadville or Doodle Town store could offer such inducements to purchasers. At the same time I began to see a way out of my financial difficulties. So I marched into the store and was greeted by a corpulent grocer—Mr. Cheatham—who inquired whether he could do anything for me.

“Do you mean to sell your goods at the prices named?” inquired I, with some directness.

“Certainly I do. I deal square. I’ll put them goods at the lowest margin for cash. I sell cheaper than any grocery in the city.”

“I am not much authority on the grocery business,” said I; “but I don’t see how it is possible for you to keep out of the poorhouse, running on such prices. Why, think of it—a boat-load of watermelons for 15 cents! Ain’t those watermelons rotten?”

“No, sir!” said the grocer, with considerable emphasis, which he backed up by rolling down a mammoth melon, which cracked wide open at the touch of the knife. I took a seat in front of the fruit—for such is my custom—and for a segment of an hour unbroken silence prevailed. At length, with the help of the merchant I regained my former footing and resumed a business attitude.

“Now,” interrogated Mr. Cheatham, “let me sell you a bill of goods.”

“All right!” responded I, as a man that had found great spoil. “Send me all the goods mentioned in your advertisement, at the prices named, to the hotel,

as per this card, and I'll meet you there for settlement at three o'clock this afternoon."

I was sauntering down the street, congratulating myself upon the marvelous business deal I had made, when my eyes fell upon another advertisement quite as pleasing as the first. The Dutch firm of Schwartz & Van Deuzen was selling out its entire stock of dry goods at auction and all varieties of human flesh seemed to be on hand, each individual trying to pluck a plum from the commercial pudding. The crier, holding up a specimen, sang out with perfunctory melody, slightly nasal, "Thirty cases custom-made shoes, each case containing 40 pair; who bids?"

"I'll take the whole lot at 75 cents," cried a peddler.

"I'll take the whole business at 80 cents," said a country merchant.

"I vill takes de whole pill of dem goots at 85 cent," ejaculated a Jew speculator.

"I take the whole concern at \$1.25," ventured I.

"Vy, you kin puy dem goots anyvere for \$1.15," said the son of Abraham.

"Oh!" said I, "I don't want to get things for nothing." So the 300 cases of shoes were knocked off to me at \$1.25.

The auctioneer next offered 300 dozen gents' shirts, which I ran up to fifty-two cents. Then I bid in 7,000 bolts of calico at five cents; 8,000 ladies' hats at thirty-five cents; 1,000 yards of carpet at 60 cents; 44,000 yards of ribbon at fifteen cents, and 17,000 bustles at 14 cents, besides minor lots of muslins, ginghams, suspenders, toilet articles, fancy soaps, and other articles at correspondingly low prices. In fact, it was not

worth while bidding against me and I took the whole stock, to the great chagrin of my competitors, who went off complaining that I was a public nuisance. But Schwartz and Van Deuzen were much pleased, and their Teutonic manager declared that I "vus de pest coostomer he effer see." "Ve danks you very much," said he, with grinning phiz and dilated eyes. "Where moost ve delifer dem goots?"

"You may send them to the hotel," said I, handing them a card with the address; "and I'll meet you there for settlement at three o'clock this afternoon."

"Very vell, mine frient; dat ish goot. Now ve wants to give you von nize bresent. You shust takes dis dogc—Here dogc; here dogc. Takes dis dogc 'long mit you."

I thanked him for the "dogc" and moved down the street, dragging my pup by a string, though he sat on his hind quarters propping himself with his feet to resist, and locating his tail between his legs, for what purpose I have never been able to ascertain. But dogs don't care much for philosophy.

At nearly every corner, I met the grocer or one of the Dutchmen or one of their emissaries hailing every cart, dray, and wagon that came in sight, in order to convey my immense purchases to the hotel. And I am candid enough to confess, that to witness all the vehicles in Philadelphia monopolized in my service was not displeasing, while my spirit, exhilarated by the buzz of wheels and the clatter of hoofs, found joy in the reflection that I could settle my debt.

But this ecstasy of mind was destined to be of short duration, for, in passing a soap factory, an unknown

hand mysteriously seized my pup, and I never saw him more. I ran to the nearest express office and asked the agent if he had heard anything of the beast, but he was too stupid to know what was going on. Then, almost out of breath, I entered a telegraph office, but the operator seemed indifferent to my grief. I wanted him to telegraph all over the United States describing my dog, and requesting his return. But he was too callous to understand.

As I stepped back on the street, it occurred to me that my only hope lay in securing the coöperation of the police. I called upon the chief of police, stated my grievance, expatiated on the lax laws of the city, and told him that unless my pup be restored before sunset, I would sue the authorities for damages, and never return to Philadelphia as long as I lived. This made him look serious for he saw I meant it. He said he would not like to see the city injured, and he would notify the officers to be on the lookout for the dog. While the chief was a very obliging gentleman, I thought it prudent to use all my own resources to retrieve my loss, so I therefore put an advertisement in four evening papers:

LOST!—A black pup with a black streak down his nose, answers to the name of Sarpedon. Carries his tail between his legs. Is poor in flesh. A liberal reward offered to finder. No questions asked. Apply to H. BEANS, Ne Plus Ultra Hotel.

It was nearly three o'clock when I began to retrace my steps in the direction of the hotel. The amount of my purchases I figured was in the latitude of fifteen dollars, just half enough to meet the pompous charge

of thirty dollars, but I knew the austere clerk would be only too glad to take the goods in part settlement, and adjust the bills with me and the contracting firms. As I entered the great thoroughfare on which the hotel was located, I found it blocked for a quarter of a mile, while for three squares all around the hotel, every cross street was thronged with innumerable vehicles freighted with my goods. The street-cars had been brought to an unceremonious halt, a long line of omnibuses and cabs was making a vain attempt to pass the tangled drays, two funeral processions were quietly awaiting more propitious times, a military parade was impatiently keeping time, but not keeping temper, while newspaper reporters and policemen were busy in their respective functions. At length, by climbing over some vehicles and crawling under others, I succeeded in effecting an entrance into the hotel.

"What does all this mean?" inquired the irate clerk in tremulous accents, as soon as he perceived me.

"It means business," responded I, with a smile of satisfaction. "I've come to settle my account. I bought these goods for about fifteen dollars, which sum you will no doubt be only too happy to pay the gentlemen from whom I purchased; and of course you will take this vast array of goods in settlement of my account, rejoicing in unexpected riches and giving me a liberal commission."

The clerk turned pale, and at this juncture there stepped up Grocer Cheatham, presenting his bill for \$52,500, while Schwartz & Van Deuzen's manager handed over a similar document for the round sum of \$45,000.

"What's the matter?" said I to the Teuton, with some misgiving.

"Vy, ve wants de monish for dem goots; dot vot ish de madders," said the manager.

"I owe you \$4.50 or \$5." said I, in measured tones.

"How ish dot?"

"Why, I bought thirty cases of shoes, each case containing forty pair, at \$1.25; didn't I?"

"Yesh; dot so!"

"Well, then I bought three hundred dozen shirts at fifty-two cents; didn't I?"

"Yesh; dot so!"

"Now let's add as we go; don't you see \$1.25 for shoes and 52 cents for shirts make \$1.77?"

"Vot dot you says? Don't you see, mine frient, dot 30 cases mit 40 pair in von case, at \$1.25 per pair, makes fifteen hundredt tollar for dem shoes; unt von dozen shirt at 52 cent apeas makes six tollar unt twenty-four cent; unt 300 dozen makes eighteen hundredt and sebenty-two tollar. Den, you sees, I adds fifteen hundredt tollar mit eighteen hundredt unt sebenty-two tollar, unt it makes dree tousand unt dree hundredt unt sevendy-dwo tollar, unt so fort troughout de pill?"

"Gentlemen," said I, facing all parties concerned, and mounting a trunk which the porter had been trying faithfully, but in vain, to get off for the half-past three o'clock train. "Those who know me best love me most. But you have trifled with my affections and laid snares for my purse. I accepted your own propositions according to their literal import, but you have done violence to the plain English in which your terms were couched and backed from your own condi-

tions. Gentlemen, though my liabilities are in excess of my assets, my acquaintance with business justifies my saying that this whole proceeding is undignified as well as most unbusinesslike."

The merchants, seeing it was a plain case, ordered their goods back to the place whence they came, and, hastened by the police, taking leave of me with much unsavory speech, while the hotel keeper added to my afflictions by stating that an excursion, composed of the upper crust of Washington society, with a number of senators and other distinguished persons thrown in, five hundred in all, had made arrangements with the hotel for dinner; but, unable to reach it because of the crowds, had gone to a rival house, thereby inflicting a loss of \$750. He didn't say which hotel lost the \$750; but I suspect that, if there were many senators along, the other house suffered the loss.

Sad at heart and fatigued by my labors I went to bed, but at four o'clock next morning I was rudely awakened by a loud pommeling on my door. It proved to be the night-clerk. He wanted to know what I meant by accumulating "all these dogs on the premises of the hotel." I told him I hadn't accumulated any dogs, and had lost the only one I had. I even asked if he wouldn't help me find my pup. He said I'd better come down on the street and "see about those dogs," if I didn't want trouble. On quiet being restored I heard dogs yelping, barking, and howling somewhere down-stairs, besides voices in the hotel rooms pitched in a high key. People were threatening to leave such a noisy place because they couldn't sleep.

I looked out of the window. An army of dogs. All sorts. Newfoundland dogs, greyhounds, terriers, fices, bulldogs, pointers, setters, beagles, bloodhounds, and all other sorts—about five hundred. All sizes, ages, colors—white, yellow, brown, liver-colored, spotted, red, striped, and blue—all claiming to be my original black pup. The gentlemen who attended these dogs saw me at the window. They smiled and saluted me. They pointed to their canines. I asked them in a voice of thunder if they thought a black pup could change his color in a single night, and if he could multiply so rapidly in the same time.

“Gentlemen,” said I, “I am sure it would be dishonest in me to claim all these beautiful dogs, as much as I should like to own them, and I am inclined to think you had better take these curs back to their respective owners or else dispose of them at the soap factory, where I now believe my pup is embalmed in fancy toilet soap. Gentlemen, I mean the dogs, farewell!”

But in the morning I found that, despite my efforts thirty big dollars stood against me still on the register, and all of my plans so far had proved abortive. There was, therefore, nothing left me but to renew my efforts to secure funds. In rather a disturbed state of mind, I accordingly repaired to the business part of the city in quest of employment. By-and-by I came upon two newsboys under a hack, engaged in a vehement quarrel, each trying to prove that the other was a rascal; and I judge from the arguments used that both were successful. Taking up a paper that one of them had laid down in the heat of controversy, I be-

gan reading the list of wants. I saw but one that seemed to suit my case; it read thus:

WANTED.—A young man with good muscles, inured to hard work, to carry burdens, do general errands, work to a hand-plow, draw a cart especially constructed for the purpose, and, in a word, act in the capacity of a family mule. Good wages. Apply at 1728 Cubic Street to J. Hardcrust.

The above impressed me as a singular want, but one that seemed easily answered. With a prospect of a final adjustment of my pecuniary embarrassment, I trotted up to 1728 Cubic Street to offer my services, since, from long acquaintance with mules, I thought I could fill the bill. Desiring to make a favorable impression at the start on Mr. Hardcrust—whose house seemed to be that of a man of large means—touching my genuine mulishness, I jumped over the low front gate, spent ten minutes very profitably under a choice dwarf pear tree, kicked over a cage of canaries, and, having pawed a couple of minutes at the door, dropped into a hammock and began wallowing. Hardcrust, somewhat rudely awaked from his evening nap, came bustling to the door.

“What will you have, boy?” inquired he, crossly.

“I saw your advertisement in the ‘Daily Mudslinger’ and thought I might suit you for a few days.”

“What are you good for, hey?”

“Well, I have lived chiefly by grubbing, sir.”

“Hard work, I should say, for a stripling like you.”

“Not much,” said I. “The greatest trouble is finding the grub.”

“I didn’t advertise for a jester, my lad; I want solid

work. I want a youth to do general pack work, haul about my family in a cart I have had made, at some expense, for the special purpose; in other words, I want a youth to perform the part of a good family mule. Can you fill the bill?"

"I think I can come as near acting the role of such an animal as anybody in the United States. You can give me a trial, at any rate."

"All right!" agreed Mr. Hardcrust. "My old mother wants to go down the street shopping this evening; so you can harness yourself into the cart and take her down town, since she is afraid of horses."

Having harnessed myself up, I drew the cart to the front gate. The old lady came out splendidly attired, and as proud as Lucifer.

"Are you to act as mule to-day?" said she, by way of salutation.

"I'll come as near it as possible," rejoined I.

"Are you safe? I'm afraid of all sorts of stock?"

"Yes, madam; I'm safe." But I don't think the old lady observed the emphasis I placed on the pronoun.

"Now, muley," continued my patron, "if you behave nicely this evening, on returning you shall have supper. Mr. Hardcrust will not care to pay more, as this is just a trial ride. I suppose you have had dinner."

"Yes, madam; I had some pears."

"Well, that's enough for a youth of your circumstances, I'm sure. By the way, my boy, let me warn you in good time; don't you put your foot near that little pear tree you see in the corner of the yard yonder. The fruit on it is just ripening. Do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," responded I, innocently.

"Cluck! cluck! Come up, muley!"

I trotted off gently, all the while pondering how a family mule would do, and resolved to fill the contract by conforming to the acts and habits of the animal whose part I was to perform.

She told me to stop at the corner, where a friend with a little boy was waiting for a street-car. As I drew up with the cart, the mutual friends, after proper street etiquette, engaged in the following colloquy:

MRS. HARDCRUST: We are trying an experiment, Mrs. Emptybrains. You know our "Society for the Employment of Vagabond Youths" is endeavoring to utilize the poor of our city, and make something of it.

MRS. EMPTYBRAINS (*much interested*): Indeed! And you propose to make mules of them! Ha! ha! ha! and this is such a nice one you have here. Whoa!

MRS. HARDCRUST: Yes, indeed; the thing is as gentle as an ox, and the very ideal of a family animal.

MRS. EMPTYBRAINS: The aims of your society certainly are laudable. If all the poor scrubs of our city could be utilized in the service of the rich, it would be a happy riddance of the present unsightly rubbish of our streets.

MRS. HARDCRUST: Yes, indeed; I loathe the wretched scum of humanity to which you refer, and—

MRS. EMPTYBRAINS: But, don't you think, Mrs. Hardcrust, after all, your noble society has undertaken an impossible task?

MRS. HARDCRUST (*confidentially*): Oh! you see, Mrs. Emptybrains, we don't really expect to do much with this swarm of idlers, so far as their social, or

even moral elevation is concerned; but we can turn the pests that infest our streets into a sort of useful animal. In fact, Mrs. Emptybrains, our grand society is compelled to have an eye rather to the comfort and aggrandizement of its own members, than to the vicious herd around us. We don't give publicity to this feature of our society, but it is natural, you know.

MRS. EMPTYBRAINS: Oh! certainly.

MRS. HARDCRUST: And then, too, Mrs. Emptybrains, our society has a benevolent feature thrown in, which gives it an air of respectability, and further (though you need not mention it), enables us to get a good deal of advertising free.

MRS. EMPTYBRAINS: I thought the papers stated that the society was strictly benevolent.

MRS. HARDCRUST (*triumphantly*): Of course it is—benevolent toward its own members—and besides, when we hire, for instance, a girl, she has special religious privileges. While we go to church, she cooks the Sunday dinner, and has all the benefit of our criticisms of the sermon after we return; or if we hire a boy, like this one, he drives the carriage on all great funeral occasions, and has all the spiritual benefits arising therefrom. Oh! yes; our society is strictly benevolent!

MRS. EMPTYBRAINS (*enthusiastically*): Capital idea! My husband will have to get a pair of them; for my little Tommy here will want one to ride and play with. So much better than a goat, isn't it? But where on earth could I put them?

MRS. HARDCRUST: Oh! bless you! The creatures sleep in the stable.

"Just splendid!" exclaimed Mrs. Emptybrains; while little Tommy, stepping bravely up, poked his finger into my side, crying "Whoa! sir!"

True to the role of a mule, I raised one of my legs and kicked the presuming infant into the gutter. After some repairs, however, the fond mother led the precocious urchin homeward. When Mrs. Hardcrust had abused me freely I, thinking mule nature justified in rebellion, kicked the spatter-board half off.

"Do you know whom you are fooling with, you miserable wharf-rat, you?" asked my humane driver.

"No, ma'am," calmly returned I.

"Well, I'm Mrs. Hardcrust, I would have you know. I move in the most respectable circles of the city, and my son is worth his hundreds of thousands. Mind how you presume, muley. When the poor scum of the street get an honorable position, they soon become spoiled and trifling—the brood of ingrates!"

"Please don't call me a wharf-rat; it is a reflection on my character as a mule," said I.

I trudged on with my precious freight until I came to a hotel, about which a large crowd had assembled. Here I stopped, and, stretching my neck to the utmost capacity, bawled and yelled and squealed at the top of my voice.

"What do you mean, you incorrigible scum?" interrogated the fair patron of charity.

"I'm braying, ma'am," retorted I, in splendid humor. "All first-class donkeys bray when they meet a drove of mules."

"Go 'long, muley; go on, sir!" shrieked the irate priestess of benevolence.



“‘GO ’LONG, MULEY; GO ON, SIR,’ SHRIEKED THE IRATE PRIESTESS OF BENEVOLENCE.”

I brayed still louder as her anger grew, and the whole crowd, attracted by my unearthly racket, turned and gazed upon the novel scene. It having been noised in the multitude that this was the initial experiment made by the Society for the Employment of Vagabond Youths, the spectators, composed of visitors, cabmen, newsboys, draymen, and an indescribable miscellany, who felt no special sympathy for the Society, waved in the air their hats, caps, handkerchiefs, and made the welkin vibrate with cheers, shouts, and laughter.

"Go on, muley—come up, sir! Cluck! cluck! Get up, you vile pest!" shouted the enraged angel of mercy.

I backed my ears, and kicked up. This was too much for the old woman. She got out of the cart, shook her fist vigorously a time or two over my head, and, leading me past the crowd, again remounted and drove on. Having stopped next at a candy-stand, where my philanthropic mistress wished to purchase some sweet articles for her grandchildren, while the confectioner was showing his samples of pastes, lozenges, fruits, nuts, and taffies, I seated myself on a box of lemons, and with hungry zeal helped myself with both hands to the shopman's choicest fruits and candies.

"What are you doing, you rogue! I see now that it is not worth while to try to elevate you. From scum you came and to scum you shall return. You are enough to test the patience of a saint. My son will turn you off as soon as you get back home."

"I am," said I, with unassumed docility, "all mine mules invariably eat when they come

near fodder. The mule that doesn't eat really isn't worthy of being a mule."

After the old lady had laid down a dollar and a quarter for the damage I had done, we moved off toward a fashionable portion of the city, where I met an object coming down the street that aroused my mulish suspicious and excited my nerves. I began shying and backing.

"What's the matter with you now, you insufferable pest?" cried Mrs. Hardcrust, in tones of undiminished wrath.

"What's that thing sliding along the street?" inquired I, timidly.

"You impertinent dummy! That's the daughter of one of our most aristocratic merchants. Stop your tricks, and go on, sir!"

"Is she sick?" asked I, trembling.

"What do you mean, sir? Have you never seen a young lady's head adorned with frizzes and bangs?"

"It's mighty curious," said I, with increasing fear, still backing. "Is her back broken?"

"You ungracious fool! In the upper circles that is what would be called a decided case of the Grecian bend. Come up, sir!"

Remembering that Bucephalus had taken fright under similar circumstances, and resolving that it was wholly mulic so to do, I scared, snorted, and ran away I kicked, I ran, I plunged. Mrs. Hardcrust screamed. I told her to stay in, and that I was perfectly safe. So I tore down the street, with about twenty-five men and boys behind me, reaching, at length, at the intersection of a cross street, a curbstone, against which the outer

wheel of the cart struck as I turned the corner, flinging Her Angelic Highness unconscious, though unhurt, on the sidewalk. In my fright I met and scattered a procession, upset a crate of eggs, made five drays run away, jumped over a baby-carriage and spilled a pair of twins, ran over a spectacled swell, and dispersed a crowd gathered around an organ-grinder. After running three squares, I broke loose from the cart and rounded up at my hotel, the Ne Plus Ultra.

It was not long before an immense concourse of people assembled at the hotel to see me. When I had made a brief recital of my honest effort to be a true mule, according to contract, in order to pay my hotel bill, a newsboy, stating that I had been worth ten dollars a day to his business for the past week, passed around his hat for a collection. Everybody threw in something, while a reporter gave five dollars, on the ground that I had benefited his paper five hundred dollars; and a clergyman gave ten dollars, because I had broken up a selfish and unchristian society by giving practical proof that a man cannot be elevated by making a brute of him. He said the moral lesson I had inculcated was worth a thousand sermons.

Thus I paid my bill, and took leave of my enthusiastic friends, who said they wished I would stay in their city a month, and that, if I ever returned, they would meet me at the railway station with a band of music, and pay my board as long as I saw fit to stay, simply on the ground that I was a public benefactor.

But I was not to leave the City of Brotherly Love without a further demonstration from the people of the place. They insisted that I be escorted to the rail-

way station with suitable pomp and eclat, and, of course, I had no means of resisting their will, although it cost my natural retiring modesty of demeanor a great effort to accede to their wishes. The newspapers and some of the more active pastors got together and provided a brass band while a company of militia did the military honors of the occasion, escorting me to the train as though I were a great conqueror, forming in two lines at the entrance to the train-shed and presenting arms as I passed through to the cars.

And I forgot to mention the photographer who took my picture. Just before I left the hotel on my triumphal way to the railroad station he made his appearance and offered me several hundred photographs of myself, saying that he had been greatly honored in having photographed such a celebrity as Heredity Beans and he gladly would give me the pictures free of charge if I would permit him to retain the negatives and put them on sale. He said he expected to make a lot of money thereby. I hope he did.

I RAISE SOME SPIRITS

Chapter XVIII.

PEOPLE like to be fooled, provided they have the privilege of paying for it. Now I don't pretend to be the Christopher Columbus who discovered this fact; some fellow ages ago found it out first and doubtless worked it upon his fellow-citizens. But I repeat it just now because when I went back to Shakerag the desire seized me to break up a certain growing leaning toward spiritualism in Toadville and to learn if the people of my own neighborhood were quite as easily gulled as those in Philadelphia. Not one man in ten cares a gingercake for a prescription that a reputable physician presents to him free of charge, but a mixture of paregoric and pepper modified by some flavoring extract, the whole claiming to heal all disease and to work miracles, and purporting to have been discovered accidentally by some old woman or some defunct Indian doctor, takes well with the public at a dollar a bottle. And on his dying bed, the man who takes it will, in all probability, scribble a testimonial swearing it cured him. And so, then, men want to be fooled and, of course, they have a fooler. The supply and demand of both commodities seem to regulate one another. Occasionally, however, the to be fooled element predominates.

Accordingly, upon my return to Shakerag, which I kept secret from every living soul but Jack Cheesequakes and the cook (whose silence and commissarial services I secured at the rate of 10 cents a day) the following card was brought out in the "Toadville Times" and afterwards posted at every crossroads in the county as well as upon the door of Shouting Church. It explains itself:

NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE!

Notice is hereby given to a confiding and appreciative public that Prof. Ytidereh Snaeb, late of Philadelphia, who has startled the world in spiritual manifestations, having actually captured a ghost long enough to secure an ethereal veil, will hold a *séance* in Odd Fellow's Hall, at Toadville, on Friday night, the 18th inst.

The Professor will make startling revelations from the dead, exhibit the captured veil, and perform all the feats of a master medium. The performance will conclude with the materialization of Balaam's Ass, a success never attempted by any other spiritualist.

ADMISSION, 25 CENTS.

Payable at the Close of the Entertainment.

At the appointed hour my stage was ready, my curtains in place, and everything just right for a grand *séance*. Odd Fellows' Hall was crowded to discomfort by sunset. There never has been, and in my judgment, there never will be, such an excitement, until the last great day. There were not a few of the simple folk of Toadville, who, having repeatedly heard rumors of the marvelous performances of traveling

mediums, believed they were true. Many of this class of people found comfort in the modest nature of my "ad" as well as in my name, which seemed to have the right ring—Prof. Ytidereh Snaeb. Some declared it was German, some testified that it was French, while others affirmed that it was of Egyptian origin, and the title of the old magicians. None of them had sufficient good gumption to see that it was Heredity Beans spelled backwards. And just at that moment I did not wish them to know me.

At a given signal, understood by Jack, all the lights were extinguished save an unsnuffed tallow candle in the rear of the hall, causing a state of things most dismal, it is true, but suited to the predilections of the spirits. Not a whisper disturbed the silence that brooded over the concourse of humanity. In disguise, I appeared promptly on the stage, with elastic tread, as if I myself were just from phantomdom. I think some thought I was. There's not a bit of doubt but that I looked the role.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said I, in making my salutation, and my voice faltering a bit as I beheld the deep interest my father was taking in the performance, and my eye met the innocent gaze of Polytechnic Campbell. "It is the custom of quacks to speak so vaguely that their utterances may apply to the persons they claim to call up, or to anybody else. They speak of matters that are known only to few, and thus narrow their chances of detection. I prefer, then, as this is my first *séance* among you, and from the nature of my mission likely to be the last, to reproduce spirits familiar to you all; and in order that you may

be satisfied of the integrity of my claim to be the leading spiritualist of the age, I now place myself at your service as a medium, to answer accurately whatever questions you may see fit to propound and to materialize any dead persons you may name."

"Call up old Captain Billy Winter," said Jack Cheesequakes, by instruction, for he and I had planned the *séance* carefully.

"Captain Winter is present," said I, in a dismal voice, to the vast assembly. "He says he spent much of his life as a soldier, having served in the struggle of 1812 and in the Mexican War. And having been an officer he will indicate his presence by firing a military salute."

As I uttered the last word I trod on a torpedo, which exploded with a sound like a pistol. Several ladies fainted and several others took a turn at hysterics, while a couple of old rustics sought the fresh air through an open window. But things soon settled down into good order.

"Now," continued I, "Captain Winter is ready to respond to inquiries."

Nobody seemed anxious to encounter the old hero and Captain Billy was dismissed without further deposition. Inasmuch as the old veteran passed off without doing any serious damage the audience was reassured, and began to test me with a variety of interrogations, some of which, I must confess, were of the foolish variety.

"Where is Uncle Spasmodic, who died a week ago?" inquired an affectionate nephew. This question was the more delicate, as the gentleman referred to had

been for thirty years chief captain of the mourners' bench at Shouting Church, and was esteemed an ideal by a host of relatives, but an arrant humbug by everybody else. But I gave them an answer that satisfied both factions. Incidentally, the man that can do this sort of thing is a pretty good politician.

"Your Uncle Spas says he feels too warmly on so grave a subject to speak with ease," said I, feelingly; "and his spirit is not sufficiently cool for him to deliver himself without considerable pains. He is grieved that it is expedient to impress the audience with a burning silence, which, under the circumstances, will prove the most flaming eloquence; and he assures his friends that if he stated the case in full it would lead to confusion, and a heated controversy, which would only destroy his peace of mind and torment him with fiery indignation."

"Poor Uncle Spas!" vociferated a small multitude of doting kin. "Poor old man!" "Poor, poor Uncle Spas!"—and there was wailing and lamentation. I now had complete control of the audience, who received my utterances as with the authoritative seal of infallibility. I justly could consider myself in the wizard-oracle class.

"How old is Miss Dorothy Squizzle?" asked a cap-tious youth.

Let me state just here that Miss Dorothy was, perhaps, the most conspicuous figure in Toadville society, being a leader in certain styles of fashion, and an ultimate authority in all matters of etiquette. Though three generations of youths had practiced courtship upon her, she was still a reigning belle with old bache-

lors and widowers. Miss Dorothy was an excellent woman, but morbidly sensitive touching the question of age. Many attempts had been made to ascertain this very important matter, but the Sphinx being unfavorable, and the family record having been torn out of the ancestral Bible, the secret was still embosomed in mystery. There was but one appeal, and that was to a medium, for the court of appeals, upon whose bench sat Miss Dorothy herself, had adjourned *sine die*.

It was now that Mr. Turkey Thompson, who had been recently left a widower the third time, was again renewed in the spirit of his youth, and was paying his tenderest addresses to Miss Squizzle. He had actually on one occasion, in an evening stroll, leaped over a fence three rails high to convince his Dorothy that he retained the agility of his boyhood. It laid him up for a week, but of course he never said anything about that. It was all over now but the wedding, and both were seated lovingly together in the audience. Therefore the interrogatory propounded to the medium, at such a time and under such circumstances, was indeed most cruel, and fell upon Miss Dorothy's ear like a peal of thunder from a clear sky. In spite of the supposed presence of spirits, she gave way to her emotions.

"Oh! don't tell!" she whispered excitedly. "Oh! don't tell! Please don't!"

But the inexorable medium, pledged to the audience to answer all questions, had to respond. "Miss Squizzle," it said in funeral accents, "has stopped being old, but thirty years ago she was forty-nine."

"Story! Story! Big story! It's not so, Mr. Thompson; I'm only an advanced girl!" ejaculated Miss Dorothy, but Mr. Thompson's visage, in the sickly glimmer of the unsnuffed tallow candle, was the scene of unmistakable horror, as he sat with his hands on his knees, bending over, and gazing with mingled feelings of devotion and regret into the flushed phiz of Miss Dorothy.

Always a lover of justice, seeing Miss Squizzle was placed at a disadvantage, I announced the presence of a spirit who wanted to speak with Mr. Thompson.

"Who is it?" asked that gentleman, with no small embarrassment, Miss Dorothy, too, showing considerable interest.

"It is your third wife," said I, and Mr. Thompson shamefacedly bit his lips, while his doting companion raised her hands in consternation.

"She says she loves you still," I said, as if translating for the spirit, "and is often comforted by your assurances that you never could love and never would marry again. She approves the views of marriage you used to express—that he who weds more than three times seeks a cook, not a wife. Be true to your convictions, dear Turkey. Adieu."

Miss Squizzle at this statement from the dear departed stamped her feet, as if to shake the dust of contemplated matrimony from them, and moved three feet from Mr. Thompson, whose attitude cannot now be described.

"Call up the Devil," demanded Toothpick Wheazles, with an air of great importance; "I want to see the old brother."



“‘STORY! STORY! BIG STORY! IT’S NOT SO, MR. THOMPSON; I’M ONLY AN ADVANCED GIRL,
MR. THOMPSON,’ EJACULATED MISS DOROTHY.”

"His Majesty is present," said I. "He wishes me to say that he does not like his children to call him brother, and especially young Mr. Wheazles, who is one of his best-beloved sons." A titter ran over the audience; then all were awed again as the conversation between Toothpick and Old Nick began. I report it word for word:

TOOTHPICK (*assuming a skeptical attitude*): Any room below?

SATAN (*resignedly*): A little; though the higher critics are taking it fast. But I have a nice place for you. [Suppressed giggles.]

TOOTHPICK (*trying to control timid nerves*): What do you think of Heredity Beans?

SATAN: I have tried Beans; but he is incorruptible. He comes from the best stock in the world. [My father smiled at the top of his voice, while Polytechnic clapped her hands unconsciously, and blushed.]

TOOTHPICK (*with anxiety*): What girl will he marry?

SATAN: The prettiest girl that ever walked the streets of Toadville. Would you like to see her picture? [The pretty girls unwittingly caress their hair, the ugly ones sigh, and a few faint. "Yes; yes!" from every part of the hall. Father anxious, Polytechnic nervous, Mrs. Campbell grave.]

SATAN (*continuing*): Ladies and gentlemen, I regret to leave such congenial company, but there are places that need me more. A thousand preachers are waiting for me to help them get up a sensational sermon for Sunday evening, and I cannot disappoint these faithful workers without detriment to my king-

dom. Besides, I must give considerable attention to our Sunday papers. I will see you later. Here, as you desired, is the picture of the future Mrs. Heredity Beans.

Then, by means of a cheap magic lantern which I had procured, I threw Polytechnic's beautiful face on a screen provided for that purpose. Then Satan left, and his departure was celebrated by the ignition of a small saucer of gunpowder.

The scene that followed is quite beyond my powers of description. Most of the audience were converted to spiritualism, and not a few wanted to call up Satan again.

Having told the ages of all the old bachelors, bacheloresses, widows, and widowers in the neighborhood, and having revealed all the secrets any one cared to conceal or to know, I held up the captured ghost's veil, thereby causing several screams on the part of the women, and several hasty exits on the part of the men.

"On a corner of the veil," said I, holding it up in the gloomy light, "is written the name of its owner, one Nest-egg." This announcement created the most profound silence. "Nest-egg tells me this is the veil of charity he brings back to earth to throw over the souls of those whose energies are exhausted at the mourners' bench, and whose religion consists in pious talk rather than pious deeds—the people who fooled him when living and deserted him when dying." Many sighs and confessions followed.

I next informed the audience that the curtain would fall, and after a lapse of ten minutes Balaam's naked

animal of burden would appear in tangible form upon the stage. This with many was the event of the evening, and expectation was on tiptoe—so were two-thirds of the people. Boys crawled upon the shoulders of men to catch a glimpse of the phantom. Finally I led Bucephalus up an inclined plane (though it was plain he was not inclined) prepared for the purpose, through the back door, and located him with his head toward the audience. A sheet loosely thrown over him surrounded him with all the solemnity and reverence due so noted a ghost. Death-like silence brooded over every part of the auditorium.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said I, “this is the first edition of Balaam’s ass, the phenomenon of the age, the sublimest achievement of spirtualism. That you may have no doubt as to his identity, I shall distribute several photographs of his master in a moment. Inasmuch as I am an apostle of reformation, and my aim is not to make money but to promote truth, I have concluded not to collect an admission fee from all of you but to ask Mr. Turkey Thompson and Mr. Toothpick Wheazles to pay for the hire of the hall and the advertising. They have had a lot of fun as well as hearing things they wanted to know. I’m sure you will see to it that they pay up. And now I ask you to accept my sincere thanks for your close attention; and I leave with you several pictures of Balaam (scattering about seventy-five of my Philadelphia photographs) for sacred mementos in coming years. Good-night!”

As these words sounded like an echo from the dead in the ears of a breathless assemblage, I mounted Bu-

cephalus and darted through the back door into the dark night, riding a ghost.

As you may suppose, I found it expedient for me to absent myself from the neighborhood a couple of weeks, in order that time might soften all asperities. I had, of course, offended everybody in the community, besides breaking up several contemplated marriages and proving the Toadville spiritualists to be fools. But the joke was so stupendous, the *séance* so ludicrous, and the people so completely taken in, that in a few weeks pretty nearly all hands forgave me, and even Miss Dorothy smiled on me again. Mr. Thompson has not smiled yet, nor has Mr. Wheazles, but I understand on good authority that they may do so soon.

At all events my object was achieved—I had sought to break up spiritualism in Toadville, and I certainly did. I don't think it will be safe for any man to propose a *séance* in that village for a century to come.

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT

Chapter XIX.

FOR some days I had been thinking between times about ecclesiastical matters, and at last I found myself hanging on the horns of a most perplexing trilemma. My father belonged to the school of Wesley, my mother was a Quaker, while Polytechnic leaned in quite another direction. Puzzled by this variety of opinions and conflicting creeds among my dear and near, I resolved to construct a church of my own, on a basis that all sane people could accept. Why should I not invent a theology? Had not a number of the mighty spirits of the past done the same thing?

I was completely carried away with my scheme, and without any difficulty, except that of paying for it, got a patent thereon. The wisdom and necessity of forming a church in the light of the New Theology became more apparent every few seconds. I took no little satisfaction in the thought that I was to be the world's greatest religious benefactor, and that all generations would owe me a debt of boundless gratitude. What a pity I had not been born several centuries sooner! As the apostle of church-building, I set out to construct a doctrinal house that would hold everybody—to frame a creed that would be adapted to men, women, children, and even the higher class of mon-

keys. In prophetic mazes I saw the petty sects into which Christendom is divided vanishing as the morning dew; I beheld opposing creeds clasping hands on the broad foundation of my new house; and in my mind's eye I descried a gorgeous temple filling the earth, on whose mammoth door was written in letters of mud trimmed with monkey tails, "Wide Is The Gate: Walk In!"

Since no time was to be lost, as a first step and with entire unanimity, I elected myself Bishop. Of course, nobody could object to that. This wisely and satisfactorily done, I drew up the following Constitution, Articles of Faith, etc.:

CONSTITUTION.

(Based on the Declaration of Independence.)

When, in the course of doctrinal squabbles and scientific mists, it becomes necessary to squelch the sects that mar the peace of Zion, and to annihilate the differences that separate partisans, it behooves the Bishop of the New Theology to assume, among the theologians of the earth, the separate and superior station to which the evangel of dirt and his own inner consciousness entitle him.

The Evolved Church holds these truths to be self-evident: that all men have a right to do as they please; that all women are born free and loquacious; and that all babies are born barefooted. That, furthermore, all mortals, whether males or females or women preachers, have cer-

tain inalienable privileges; that among these are matrimony, political chicanery, and the pursuit of religious novelties. That to secure these rights the New Theology is preached among men, deriving its just powers and unique ordinances from the supreme authority of the Gospel of Mud and the Science of Mrs. Eddy; that when any creed becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of any man, male or female, who has a vivid imagination, to alter, abolish, or swallow it, and to institute a new church, laying its foundation on such dogs, dogmas, or doggerels, and prescribing its ordinances in such forms as shall seem to him most likely to satisfy his vanity. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that rituals long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; but when a long train of authenticated doctrines and canons, shooting invariably at the same object, evinces a design to make the human race behave itself, it is the right, yea, the duty, of mankind to knock such church government into a cocked hat, and to provide new creeds to amuse themselves and their children.

I, therefore, Bishop-elect and Apostle Plenipotentiary of the New Theology, in solemn convocation of one, do, in the name and by the authority of the said dignitary, publish and declare, that the aforesaid church is, and of right ought to be, free and independent (if not, why so?); that it outstrips all other churches, and, according to the eternal fitness of things, as a free and independent church, it has full power to raise a row,

break the peace, or found a dancing-school, and cut all other capers which an independent church may of right cut. Selah.

This church shall be known as THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT, whose sublime mission shall be so to blend the Church and the World, that all conditions of mankind may be united in one harmonious hole.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

Article 1. The world is the result of a fortuitous concourse of atoms, and is a mighty funny thing anyhow.

Article 2. Man came from a lobster; and after the vicissitudes of a brief existence, he is gathered unto his fathers in the Kingdom of Mud.

Article 3. It is impossible for a man ever to know anything in this life; and it is the supreme end of his ambition to make money, tell stale jokes, guess at the age of the world, play the fool, and die an agnostic.

Article 4. Wisdom consists in denying what has been proved for six thousand years, extinguishing all possible lights, deifying abstractions, abstracting Deity, and turning the Ten Commandments into a muddle.

Article 5. Do others before they do you, and do 'em brown.

CATECHISM.

What is your name?

Answer: Bill.

Who gave you this name?

Answer: Pap.

What else did he give you?

Answer: A top and a tin horn.

Name the Apostles.

Answer: Darwin, Wallace, Huxley, Haeckel,
Mill, Spencer, Mrs. Eddy.

Who was Mrs. Eddy?

Answer: She was a Baker.

What did she bake?

Answer: She roasted three husbands.

What is mind?

Answer: No matter.

What is matter?

Answer: Never mind.

What can you say of sickness?

Answer: In sickness and pain nothing is the
matter, since there is no matter.

What is sin?

Answer: Sin is faulty imagination.

What are natural objects?

Answer: Things not what they seem.

What is Evolution?

Answer: It is the science of glorified dirt.

What put Darwin on the track of Evolution?

Answer: He smelt a rat.

THE ORDINANCE OF SKINNING-THE- CAT.

Whereas, much prejudice hath arisen because of the inscrutable mystery of the ordinances, the church, of her own sovereign will, doth deem it meet and right to institute a single act, to be

known as the Scientific Ordinance of Skinning-the-Cat. This rite the church doth understand to take the place of baptism, being a more active expression of that lively change through which the heavenly pilgrim is required to pass, meeting on the one hand the exactions of the Scripture—viz., a revolution of heart; and on the other, the demands of Science—viz., an evolution of the body.

The candidate shall be blindfolded by the priest, and led backwards by the same, to the left-hand corner of the church, where he shall sit, in the presence of the congregation, on a stool covered with sheepskin, which the church doth interpret to be symbolic of innocence. After a silence of three minutes, the priest shall unbandage the candidate, who, while the choir chants an appropriate psalm, shall skin-the-cat to the best of his ability; whereupon he shall have the sign of the Happy Horse-Shoe made on the back of his neck, and be declared to be in fellowship with the New Theology.

Women, seeing they cannot conveniently submit to this rite, shall be excused; howbeit, they shall be required to hold their tongues with gravity on the Movable Feast of the New Moon.

Should any be skeptical touching the authority for this rite, he shall be referred to those passages of Dictionary Writ involving the idea of turning, and such words as convert, converted, pervert, perverted, divert, diverted, etc. No act

so fitly expresses this turning as skinning-the-cat; therefore, any prejudiced mind will frankly admit that this impressive and beautiful ordinance is both Dictionarial and scientific. Nay, more, the world is full of symbols of this act. The earth itself turns around; the autumn leaves turn brown; and the average mule turns over. The priest shall so expound.

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

1. Sin is not evil.
2. Everything is nothing.
3. A dead man isn't dead.
4. A ten-dollar gold piece is an idea—a good one.
5. The father of this cult is a woman.
6. Pain is a freak of the fancy; that is, the other fellow's fancy.
7. Cramp colic has its seat in the imagination—that is, after it sits down.

VESPER SONG.

BY ANN ONYMOUS.

As a rule, a man's a fool;
 When it's hot,
 He wants it cool;
 When it's cool,
 He wants it hot;
 Always wanting
 What is not;
 Never liking
 What he's got.
 As a rule, a man's a fool.

BENEDICTION.

Omnific Mud, from which we come, and in which we abide, keep us in harmony with thyself, and at last receive us into thy kingdom.
O. K.

The House that Jack Built was now complete. It was a large structure, with plenty of room; lighted by gas and heated by ideas; and since it was dedicated to the god Mud, it was without a bathroom. I'm quite sure, even at this day, that it was ten thousand times ten thousand per cent better than some of the cults flying around now and masquerading as religions because it didn't outrage God and Christianity. I showed the plan of my church to a number of the higher critics and to some women of both sexes, all of whom were loud in its praise. Many prophesied that it was destined to supersede all other organizations, and be the church of the future. Some said it was a happy hit to found a religious system on the Declaration of Independence, so that a man need not be over-particular about Scriptural authority for every little thing he does. Not a few thought it a capital idea to leave out hell; others held that the omission of heaven was timely. All declared that the absence of the Ten Commandments indicated progress. A multitude promised to join me when I got things started. I truly can say that things looked most hopeful for the success of my church, and I began to congratulate myself.

But one morning I awoke from a series of dreams in which the devil and his imps chased me, prodding

me with pitchforks. I arose and began to dress, and outside I heard a pig grunt. This brought me to my senses. I opened two of my eyes very wide, and behold! I saw, as in a vision, my church blown to pieces in a violent storm, for I had neglected to put any foundation under it. So right then and there I went out to the pig-pen and poured out the ecclesiastical garbage I had composed as proper food for swine, thus forever abandoning the gospel of tommyrot and charlatanism. Then I decided to hasten toward Zion. Two months later I entered a theological seminary. Anyone who wishes may have the job I created as Bishop of the New Theology, though before they are desecrated to the office let me quote to them the words of the Son of God: "Upon this rock I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Just remember that, if you please, Mr. Man-with-an-elastic-religious-conscience, when you take up your work as the Bishop of the New Theology. Just remember it also, Mrs. No-denomination-whatever, when you are inclined to run after some outlandish and sacrilegious and newfangled cult gotten up by somebody who wants to fatten his own purse and the list of guests at the Devil's boarding-house. And remember it also, Reverend Doctor Bighead, when you come to study over the Scriptures to find some new thing to propound to your flock and lead it into the tortuous ways of schism and disbelief, because you do not stick to the sort of gospel you learned at the theological seminary and the doctrine that your fathers in the Church taught. Just remember it, if you please, Mr. Higher-critic, when you seek to overturn the revealed



"BEHOLD! I SAW, AS IN A VISION, MY CHURCH BLOWN TO PIECES BY A VIOLENT STORM."

truth of the Book of Books. Just remember it and keep on remembering it.

If you forget it, as I came near doing, the things that will happen to you will be many and terrible. Your chance of explaining your position, when you come to answer before the Great Judge, will not be the sort you have been accustomed to having down here on earth. Your audience will be of a vastly different type and the sophistries you have handed out here will not pass muster as logic there. The justice that will be dispensed to you then will not be the sort that was dispensed to our acquaintance Turnipins a few chapters back.

For every sin you committed against God, Mr. Bishop-of-the-New-Theology, you will have to pay double to the Church of God. For every sinful thing that your silly brain thought, Mrs. No-denomination-whatever, you will have to answer as you would to the breaking of the Ten Commandments, while for you, Mr. Higher-critic, there will be good and sufficient punishment. I rather would take my chance with a thief and a murderer at the last day than with the man or the woman who leads other men and women astray from the path of righteousness by means of false religious lights.

Take the advice of Heredity Beans, dear reader, and steer clear of the things that call themselves new religions, or new faiths, or new schools of religious thought. Do not, if you value your life or your soul, play with the edged tools of Christian Science, or Faith-cure, or Theosophy, or the doctrine that permits a man to outline his own Decalogue. The cults that

masquerade under the name of Christian have not Christ and the Cross at their head. Believe me, the real and true leader of such faiths, if they can be dignified by such a grand old title, is Satan himself. It is one of his favorite devices for the ensnaring of the weak and the thoughtless. Once in his power in this way it is almost impossible to be saved.

You cannot deify mud or a stone and square your religious account with God. You cannot set up a woman or a man, as some of the latter-day "faiths" do, and give her or him the worship that is due to God, and then expect him to pardon your offence against the first law of the Decalogue. You cannot expect to heal a broken leg or arm through prayer alone. God does not mean to have things done that way in these days. Nor can you expect in such a way to raise up your child from the bed whereon it is sick with diphtheria or some other malignant disease. God doesn't do things in that way, either, and you sin against him when you expect it. Go back to the faith of your fathers. They lived, prospered, and went to heaven by it; and what was good enough for them certainly is good enough for you. If there is deadly illness in your house and you are inclined to the Eddy madness or the Faith-cure foolishness take some of Heredity Beans' good gumption and get down on your knees for the purpose of seeking God's pardon for your error.

Then run to the nearest physician and ask him to break his record getting to your home.

MY FIRST SERMON

Chapter XX.

HAVING been ordained at last to the work of the Gospel ministry, I accepted an invitation to preach at Tadpole Chapel, Toadville, in the absence of the pastor, though I had never preached a sermon in my life. Now Toadville was a remarkable village—remarkably so. Its population was, by actual count, three hundred and twenty-seven—the inhabitants said three hundred and twenty-eight. Putting the village doctor at his own numerical value the latter estimate may have been correct. Its public buildings were the Phoenix grogshop, the Cosmopolitan Hotel, three stores, running from a twenty-five-cent to a three-hundred-dollar stock; a single-barrel drug-store, and Tadpole Chapel. I name the buildings in the order of importance attached to them by the Toadvillians. The transforming paint-brush never had migrated to Toadville, and the voice of the eloquent lawn-mower never had been heard in the land. The lightningrod man had found it, sold one rod, departed, and never returned. But it is of the Toadville inhabitants chiefly that I wish to speak—the members of Tadpole Chapel—and, of course, I must respect seniority and begin with the oldest inhabitant.

The original settler of Toadville was Crybaby
(250)

Stove, whose high prerogative was to roast alive all that differed with him, to keep his pastor in a stew, and the whole church in a broil. Stove was deaf in one ear and always kept a wad of cotton in the other. You had to put both feet on the pedestals, operate the knee-swell, pull out all the stops, and with your *vox humana* raised to the highest pitch, shout, "Brother Stove!" This was simply a trick on the part of Crybaby to hear little and talk much. Nobody knew his age, and nobody in the same enclosure with him ever had the courage to ask it. Tradition placed it at ninety-seven years, but his vigor was so remarkably preserved, that a stranger would have reckoned him under rather than over sixty-five.

Crybaby was the oddest of mortals. He never was known to smile except when a pastor offered his resignation. He actually had "run off" so many ministers from Tadpole Chapel that no preacher of ordinary courage wished to encounter him. The trouble with Stove was that he wanted to preach himself, being profoundly impressed with a call to the ministry, but as no one save Stove was thus impressed, no field opened to the aspiring theologian. He wrote all the obituaries for the community, and when rehearsing them on public occasions, did all the crying. He was never known to weep except before a crowd, and then he never failed. His reputation had reached me, and I am free to say it filled me with apprehension as I accepted the invitation to preach my maiden sermon at his church.

The reader will next make his bow to the village doctor. Dr. Joab Fyddlestycks was six feet tall,

scarcely distinguishable from a lightningrod of the same length, and he was remarkably fluent. I never saw him but that he declared he had just spent his last dime, though a small fortune was owing him. He never was asked for a contribution to any benevolent objects but that he had not given "largely" to a late appeal, though he never remembered the name of the man who made the appeal. He invariably had a call at the time of religious service, except occasionally on conference days, when he came after the sermon to answer to his name, to avoid a charge for non-attendance. On such occasions he made almost all of the motions, and did all of the talking. He nominated all the committees, and drew up all the resolutions. He always subscribed liberally to the pastor's salary—but he never paid. Whenever approached by the treasurer on the subject, he was "just waiting for a responsible patient to settle a large bill next Saturday." Why Dr. Fyddlestycks should be pressed financially was a mystery to me, as his medicines cost a mere trifle and his family was small. His quinine pills seemed made out of mud coated with flour, while his paregoric, his unfailing panacea, was diluted with colored water, which he termed a "mild alterative."

No man ever had heard anything which the Doctor had not heard so long ago that he had forgotten it. He was intimately acquainted with all the noted personages of the day, some one of whom was always on the eve of visiting him, but was prevented by some unforeseen occurrence.

The Doctor's "office" was a comfortable oak chair at the door of the Phoenix bar-room. Whenever he

pulled a tooth, he would step inside and take a drink. A crowd of village loafers habitually resorted to his "office" of an evening to hear his marvelous stories. Fyddlestycks could make a lie appear impressive, and never suffered anybody to tell a tale that he could not beat. On one occasion a city drummer happened at the "office," and felt it incumbent on him to enlighten the natives of Toadville on the subject of snakes. I must relate what happened to him.

"Down East, where I came from," said the drummer, conscious of superior knowledge, "our people are beginning to use snakes for telegraph wires, there being one now in active operation between Boston and Bunker Hill."

Every eye turned to the Doctor for relief. Fyddlestycks paused a moment as if to collect his scattered forces and then advanced to the attack.

"It is altogether probable, sir," said he. "Some years ago I discovered and reported to the profession that there is a sufficient amount of electricity in certain kinds of serpents—which, in reality, sir, are natural batteries—to send telegraphic communications, the length of the serpent being the only desideratum. I noticed, however, in yesterday's paper that the head of a serpent, known to science as the *serpens ingens*, had been brought from England to New York, the body crossing the Atlantic, leaving several miles of tail coiled up on the docks at Liverpool. The old cable has suspended operations, while the new line is working night and day."

The gentleman from the East took the next train out of the county. But I couldn't take it, for I had

an engagement to preach before the learned Doctor, and found myself under the necessity of facing the ordeal. The majority of the members of Tadpole Chapel were as pious a folk as the sun shines upon, and only the assurance that I should have their sympathy made it possible for me to face the people among whom I was reared.

I never had imagined that there could be any very decided difficulty in discoursing on some simple text for the space of thirty or forty minutes. I had six weeks in which to prepare, and, of course, began by attempting to select an appropriate text. I opened my Bible at the first chapter of Genesis, and read the account of the creation. This subject struck me forcibly, seeming to afford a wide range for speculation, exegesis, and application. A short investigation, however, convinced me that Moses had pretty well compassed the subject, and that, for several years at least, I could not hope to surpass the great Hebrew in his chosen field. I laid the fascinating theme aside for future and indefinite consideration. So I passed on to the fall of man and the loss of Eden. That seemed to suit exactly; what a range for first-class oratory! Man, crushed under the blow of divine wrath—lightnings burning on the bosom of the angry clouds—hoarse thunders uttering their fierce anathemas—humanity fleeing from Paradise, whose gate is guarded by cherubic hosts and a flaming sword! I worked on this majestic theme ten days and nights, when I came to the conclusion that I couldn't beat "Paradise Lost." I reluctantly laid it aside for future reference.

Next came the Flood, which, at first inspection,

seemed scarcely grand enough for a maiden sermon. Still, it widened a little under my mental magnifying lens, assuming at length quite respectable proportions. I pictured in my mind the thundering waves beating down smiling villages; I described lovers sitting on the veranda in the moonlight, bending over their cologne bottles, while anxious youths waited for a reply to a proposition of marriage. In cases of favorable response a huge wave broke off the engagement. Others were marrying and given in marriage; the happy groom was repeating after the minister, "with this ring I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow," when his worldly goods suddenly became watered stock.

I drew mentally touching scenes of frightened girls 'phoning to Noah to ascertain what hour the ark would sail, mothers-in-law sitting on gentle knolls, holding in one hand a silk umbrella, while in the other a fountain-pen to record their last tender advice to their newly-acquired sons. I knew that would bring the tears from Crybaby. I thought of the confusion growing out of the breaking up of all the ordinary means of communication—telegraph wires down, post offices closed, cars and trains stopped, and even the express facilities suspended, while the bicycles ceased their functions, and the wagons and carriages, with a few exceptions, were standing in the highways with the water rising above their axles, and poodles with red ribbons on their necks looking out of the windows of the latter vehicles.

The daily papers, I foresaw, would advertise rubber goods at exorbitant prices, at the same time mark-

ing a decline in the quotations of cigarettes and cigars; for in a crisis men do not want to put their money in things that end in smoke. Opera glasses were firm; but chewing-gum and popcorn were lower. The forecast said, "Continued rain." I determined to portray the rising waters, floating houses, pianos, sewing-machines, flood, and darkness—all the electric lights out—storms and waterspouts, the maddened ocean sweeping the wicked away and roaring in tremendous majesty over hills and mountains.

In my fervid imagination, I got aboard the Ark, riding triumphantly on the high seas, rejoicing in the salvation of Jehovah. But here my theme gave out, and, landing on Mount Ararat, I abandoned the Ark and came down, my fancies subsiding much faster than the waters.

After this I turned my attention to the Ten Commandments, but found them already sufficiently developed—and besides I hadn't kept enough of them.

The next field that appeared to open bright with promise was that of prophecy, offering most magnificent opportunities for lofty flights of eloquence and for profound insight into hidden mysteries. So I determined to unravel Ezekiel's vision—but it didn't unravel.

Four of the six weeks having elapsed, I arrived at the conviction that there was no suitable text for me in the Old Testament, and so passed over into the New. Here I found several inviting passages. I tried the general Judgment, finding there, too, that the supply was not equal to the demand. I then tried to ride the pale horse of Revelation, but he threw me.

The six weeks now had drawn to a close. It was late Saturday evening, and I was still without a text. After tea, I lighted my lamp, searching until nine o'clock for an appropriate theme for next morning. At last my happy eye fell on the words of Matthew xii. 12: "How much then is a man better than a sheep?" It is noticeable that the tyro in preaching is almost sure to select the loftiest or else the quaintest texts in Scripture, deeming himself quite competent to manage matters that the masters in theology touch with fear and trembling. The fledgeling preacher actually steps in where bishops fear to tread. Under intense application, I discovered, to my unspeakable satisfaction, that my lamb developed finely, his horns assuming proper dimensions, his fleece broadening and whitening, his tail following the law of perpendiculars, until I had for my Sunday discourse not a skeleton, but a full-grown sheep. A case of genuine Darwinity, one might say, and one showing the remarkable effect of evolution.

An enormous congregation greeted my appearance at Toadville, the home of my forefathers and the scene of a large portion of my youth. This circumstance accounted for the unusual gathering. The center of converging eyes, I entered the pulpit heavy-laden with my sheep. The companions of my youth, no doubt recalling many an adventure of the past, stared at me, while older heads (the little episode with the hornets and the late *séance* being still green spots in their minds) shook their heads in doubt as to the propriety of my standing behind the sacred desk. My father was outside, saying in whispered tones of unmistakable

ble ecstasy, "That's my boy, gentlemen. Open both ears to-day. It's in him; I tell you, it's in him. He's a chip off the old block, my boy is." As Polytechnic passed in, he gave her a sly pinch, whispering softly, "Don't cast love-glances at my boy until he gets through preaching." Answering with a blush, she was soon lost in the multitude.

The congregation, curious to behold the "new preacher," had promptly assembled, and as promptly turned their heads to gaze at me as I walked up the aisle, which had been taken up with pallets, by fond mothers, for their children to frolic or sleep on during service, as seemed to them good. I managed to wade through the little fellows without doing any serious damage, only here and there knocking over a couple of youngsters that tried to climb my legs, while before I opened the service I had to do considerable hand-shaking, my father pointing proudly to me.

Commencing my sermon with a most startling flight of eloquence, I soared from the vine-clad hills of earth to the amaranthine bowers of Paradise, taking in the stars as I prosecuted my voyage. Paradise being some distance from this mundane sphere, my rhetorical wings grew too weak to sustain so long a strain, and dropped me somewhat unceremoniously in Toadville, to escape as best I could from the two horns, not of a dilemma, but of my sheep. Polytechnic's eyes were turned upon the floor, her cheeks suffused with crimson, while my father twisted restlessly in his seat.

Fortunately, before a miscellaneous audience, there are always two resources in case of a sermonic failure; namely, obstreperous bawling or the recital of a death



“ ‘THAT’S MY BOY, GENTLEMEN. OPEN BOTH EARS TO-DAY. IT’S IN HIM; I TELL YOU, IT’S IN HIM.’ ”

scene. Nothing was now left me but to employ both of these life-preservers, and strike manfully for the shore. Having shouted "Glory!" and a few kindred words at the top of my voice several minutes, thus raising my hearers to a suitable emotional frame, I described a dead pig I had seen in the road some weeks before, with telling effect. It was a poor little pig, I stated, whose father had perhaps been slaughtered by the ruthless hand of the butcher, whose parental care was forever denied the pitiful and helpless offspring. Its little feet were still in death, its little eyes were glazed in forgetfulness. The mother had returned to her wallowing in the mire, there to sorrow alone for the little one that lay by the roadside dead.

Seeing I had reached a ripe climax, I concluded. Crybaby wept profusely. Owing to a peculiar bent in his constitution, he could not be happy without a death scene or a funeral—though a pig would do for a subject.

"Magnificent! doubly magnificent!" exclaimed he; "I'll never forget that pig scene, and it will do me good for months to come. Punctuate your sermons with funerals, my boy; that's the thing that tells every time."

Even Dr. Fyddlestycks came up to congratulate me.

"I tell you, sir," said he, enthusiastically, "that pig incident was a masterpiece. It reminds me of the occasion on which I addressed, by earnest invitation, the court of Queen Victoria, and related the original story of the lost kid. The effect, sir, was so prodigious that I was invited to repeat it at every court in Europe."

And there were other results from my sermon. Mrs.

Campbell was seized with a pair of the jimjams, and Polytechnic was gasping with a case of the highjinks. My father leaped from his seat crying: "That's my boy, every inch of him. I knew it was in him. Chip off the old block, my boy is." Tearful sisters passed me saying, "Splendid!" Many said it was the best sermon they ever heard. I drank all these compliments in with great dignity, and looked with benignity upon my fellow Toadvillians.

And I returned home fully satisfied that within less than six weeks I should walk as pastor into the grandest church on the Western Continent, with a salary of \$5,000 the first year. At odd times I found myself drawing a picture of the church of which I was to be pastor, its cloud-reaching steeple, its surging congregations, and its palatial parsonage hard by. Week after week, however, passed, as I sat each evening on the fence, waiting for the mail to bring me a call; but no call came. I saw in the "Ecclesiastical Conglomerator," a denominational weekly, that a number of fine churches were pastorless, yet, strange to say, it never occurred to them to communicate with me. Surely I was known everywhere by this time, and I have always thought that was the reason I didn't get the call.

MISS SOOK SHOESTRINGS

Chapter XXI.

ABOUT a year after my ordination I became pastor of the Eden Church at Doodle Town, suffocating upon an annual salary of three hundred and fifty dollars. It came about this way:

On returning one evening from a most charming visit to Polytechnic, I found a letter awaiting me, addressed to the Reverend Heredity Beans. I had never seen the title of Reverend written in connection with my name before, and, as I gazed upon it, the curious writing, and the odd envelope, I felt my cheeks redden. I am now recognized by the world, thought I, as a true son of Levi, a respected member of the cloth, and a veritable successor of the Apostles, if not indeed an incipient Apostle himself. With beating heart I withdrew from the family group to my own apartment, that with no eye to see, no ear to hear, and no tongue to tell, I might examine the mystic epistle. Thus it read.

Dear Brother Beans: In regular conference, on December 5th, Eden church, at Doodle Town, elected you unanimously its pastor, at an annual salary of \$350. This is an interesting field, in serious need of a faithful undershepherd who is willing to make sacrifices for the good of the cause. The church

will expect you to be punctual in all appointments, to conduct all prayer-meetings, lead the singing, hold family prayer wherever you lodge, warn the wicked, strengthen the feeble, visit the flock, settle all disputes, build a new church, conciliate the women, and adjust politics. And I might add that you would also be expected to settle all fusses growing out of love affairs and dog-fights.

Fraternally yours,

TWANG NOODLE, C. C.

To which I replied:

My darling Twang: Your exhilarating favor nas reached me, awakening music from chords that had not been touched for many a moon. Indeed I have not felt so great ecstasy since a certain Fourth of July barbecue of my youth. I have for some time thought I would like to be a missionary to the heathen, and I rejoice that the opportunity is now offered. Please say to the saints at Doodle Town, on my behalf, that I accept their call; and in addition to the duties enumerated, I shall be glad to sweep the church, cut the wood, make the fires, and ring the bell. I shall fill the pulpit next Sunday.

With a cataract of love, I am yours, H. BEANS.

I mounted my mule, and after a wearisome journey, through desolate pine woods, toward nightfall reined up at the plain but comfortable residence of 'Squire Shoestrings. The 'Squire kept a crossroads store, and had not yet come in for the evening meal. His wife, however, met me with some degree of surprise, but on learning my name, received me with cordiality, inviting me at once to a blazing hickory fire in her best room. I was, I am free to say, not a little glad the 'Squire was out, for it has always been easier for me to get acquainted with a woman than a man.

"You have a flourishing church in the neighborhood?" ventured I, in measured accents.

"Good es enny," replied my amiable hostess.

"And no doubt by proper effort it may be still further developed," suggested I.

"Enwalloped?" exclaimed the Squire's wife, getting a trifle excited. "Them church air been standin' these forty year, an' ain't been enwalloped yit. Is that yer arrant here—to enwalloped them church? Kase if it air, ye's got business onto yer hands, ye has."

"Oh! madam, you did not catch the force of my remark," said I in confusion. "I simply meant that with proper efforts the operations of the church might be enlarged; and—"

"Opuration or no opuration," interrupted my hostess, "them church air large ernough. It air forty foot by sixty, and everybody of common onderstandin' knows that's large ernough fur this 'ere neighborhood. Mought be the folks is larger whar you come from, but we is small pertaters 'bout these p'int, and kin squeeze ourselves into small quarters."

I was inexperienced and timid. Had I possessed the miraculous gift, I would gladly with becoming velocity have crawled into a dirt-dauber's nest to spend the night, but it was a crisis in my ministerial life, and I resolved to steer my way over the breakers at all hazards. I now began to discover something of the general spirit and intelligence of my community.

"Who was your last pastor?" resumed I, mildly.

"W'all, lem me see on it. It was ole Brother Do-nothing. An' fur erwhile he was moughty pop'lar—everybody 'peared to like him pcw'ful tell he beginned

to talk erbout money, an' folks los' confidence in him p'isonous rapid. It won't begin to do, chile, fur a sarvant of the Lord to talk erbout sich things."

"No, indeed. So let's talk about finances."

"P'oor Frances! she's dead and gone this two year next March."

"By the way, did the church pay the salary of its late pastor promptly?"

"W'all, sometimes it did, an' sometimes it didn't; most in gen'ally, p'rhaps, it didn't. But the bretherins allers gin him more'n half on it, an' that's er plenty fur enny heavenly-minded soul. Yer know er preacher of the gawspill hadn't oughter hanker atter arthly things."

"What was the amount of his salary?" continued I.

"I think how I hear 'em say [casting her eyes to heaven as if to recall the vast sum] it were three hundred an' fifty dollar; a precious bit, accordin' to my way o' thinkin', fur er hour's p'reachin' twict er Sunday. I know I'd feel es proud es er hornit ef I could squeeze that money jes fur talkin' er hour or sich er matter. Talk's cheap, chile!"

"Yes, madam," indignantly rejoined I. "Some talk would be dear at any price, while other talk is not esteemed because it is beyond the range of fools."

The old woman was cute enough to see just what I meant and her wrath was kindled to such a pitch that her eyes became menacing craters, through which poured the fires generated by the active forces of the volcano within. I have never spoken it abroad, but I confess it here, I was seriously alarmed. As she viewed the poker, I contemplated the window. In

fact, things were getting dreadfully mixed, when a footstep in the passage announced the arrival of 'Squire Shoestrings, whose presence interrupted a conversation that was not altogether unto edification, and possibly averted a catastrophe that would by no means have been comforting to my shrinking nature. The 'Squire received me kindly, expressing the hope that I would like the village and the church, though for himself he had never joined it. As for the salary, he said he knew it was small, but he thought I might manage "to make out."

"Yes," said I, "I can get along, but the salary is hardly enough to buy toothpicks."

"Spiders an' gingercakes!" gasped the excited matron in bewilderment. "I sees es plain es the nose onto a man's face, ef you come here, yer's gwine ter commote this community. An' mark my talk pertic'lar, ef you teches them church, it air enwalloped beyant all rekivery."

To the evident relief of all parties, supper was announced and an excellent meal was served. My appetite, somewhat impaired by previous exhaustion and embarrassment, was readily satisfied with two fried chickens, a quart of cold collards, seven cups of coffee, several glasses of milk, a lot of tea-cakes, and a few other small delicacies, whose names I cannot all recall just now, but which included pies, sweetmeats, and nuts. When Mrs. Shoestring discovered my devotion to her table dainties, she began to soften up most wonderfully toward me. Every time I handed up my cup to be refilled with coffee, or helped myself to a new dish, I rose ten degrees in the warmth of her

affections, for she prided herself on her culinary attainments, and together with her family, worshiped the god Pan. The 'Squire's evident liking for me, coupled with the growing intimacy of the children, conduced to advance me in the esteem of my hostess, who graciously swung from the extreme of reserve to that of open-heartedness.

After supper, the family, consisting of parents, five sons, eight daughters, and two dogs, met in Mrs. Shoestrings' sitting room for a social hour. A piece of well-charred lightwood knot made a noble effort to illuminate the apartment, sending out now and then a precious little ray of resplendence; but alas! Sook, the eldest girl, removing her black gum dipping-brush from her elaborate mouth, and puckering her lips according to the law of resultant forces, snuffed (pardon the pun, but the snuff actually seemed to put the fire out) the heroic but feeble blaze.

"Thar now!" said the parents. "Now, Sis, what did you do that fur?" chimed in each of the children. I don't think the pups made any remark, but this statement, however, is not guaranteed, since the din of voices was so great as to render the canine accent not easily distinguishable. After a search of half an hour in all the rooms, loft, and kitchen, for a match, Stuffin Shoestrings remembered that he had put one of those household necessities in his Sunday vest-pocket, and soon rekindled the invaluable knot.

"Now, Sook," said Mrs. Shoestrings, glancing furtively at me, "I specks you hain't made no favorable impression on Brother Beans by lettin' him diskiver that snuff bresh, bein' how he don't smoke hisself."

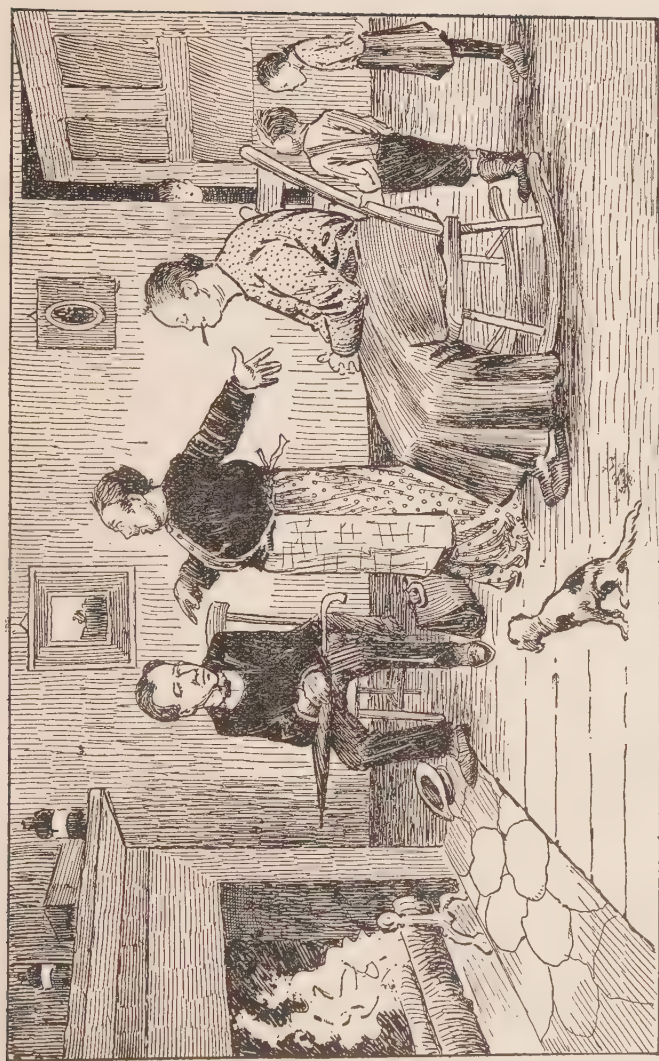
"Never mind, Brother Beans," continued the mother, "Sook is a smart gal, an' kin turn a broom es brisk es a whirlwin'. All the young men in the neighborhood looks on Sook es bein' a mighty chance. But I tells Sook, considerin' her blood an' property, she's got to set her pegs higher'n anything in these diggins. See, Brother Beans," lowering her tone in great confidence, "Sook's pa has got heaps of land, an' er mill, an' er house an' lot in town; an' I ses to Sook, ses I, 'Sook, child, you can't 'ford to fling yourself away on this neighborhood trash.' "

"You are entirely right, madam," said I, somewhat bewildered, "to wish the highest privileges and advantages for your daughter, and I trust your most sanguine expectations, so far as they are for Sook's highest good, may be realized. Your first care, however, should be to impress her with the solemnity of her duty to God, and the beauty of holiness."

"Which I does; an' fur that reason I has allers told Sook how mighty pleasin' it would be to her ole maw ef she would take a likin' to some pious man what could 'spound the Scripturs to her—an pertic'lar ef it wuz er preacher."

"Now, maw! you know I hain't fit," said Sook.

"Hush! Sook; you hain't no fool, kase you know mighty well a preacher has so many burdens on his mind that he don't want no mummy 'bout him. Not much; he wants a wife that flies 'bout like er hummin' bird, full of fun, lively es er cricket, with plenty of spirit. Brother Beans, see that gal lookin' like she wa'nt thinkin' 'bout nothin'? She ain't no idiot, Brother Beans, Sook ain't."



“ ‘BROTHER BEANS, SEE ‘THAT GAL LOOKIN’ LIKE SHE WA’N’T THINKIN’ ‘BOUT NOTHIN’?
SHE AIN’T NO IDIOT, BROTHER BEANS, SOOK AIN’T.’ ”

"You, maw! you know I never 'tends ter marry. Hic, hic, hic."

"W'y, Sook! It wuz but yistiddy you 'lowed es how Brother Beans' pictur wuz the pretties' thing you ever see, an' you wisht he would only ax you to m—"

"Stop! maw," screamed Miss Shoestrings, sliding rapidly across the floor, and placing her expansive hand over her mother's mouth and giggling. This touching episode—it was really very touching—caused everybody in the room to roar with laughter, except Shoestrings, who was asleep, and myself, who wanted to be asleep—and the pups.

By this time, unfortunately, the younger children had come to the conclusion that I was intended for their sport as well as for that of others. For twenty minutes they had been gradually getting nearer to me, when at last one little fellow poked the broomstick at me to see if I would bite. As soon as it was perceived that I was altogether harmless, he ran his hand into my pocket and grabbed my knife. Another plundered my remaining pocket and took out my purse, while two sprightly girls sat on my knees, and a promising boy climbed upon a chair and then arranged himself astraddle of my neck.

The fond mother looked on admiringly, occasionally remarking, "Napoleon, you's a rude chile, son. I don't speck Brother Beans is used to sich rude childeen." Then again, when I had been nearly devoured, the placid parent would say, all the while approving the precocity of her boy, "John Adams, why don't you quit, son?" Matters grew worse and worse, the chil-

dren climbing up on me and pillaging me with greater and greater barbarity, until, in the effort to disentangle myself, I trod on the tail of one of the dogs that had been eying me suspiciously for some time, arousing his canine wrath. The insulted pup, attempting to wreak vengeance on me, in the confusion of legs inflicted a wound on Stuffin's thigh, which caused the entertainment to conclude with a bawl.

John Adams was now ready to take me to my room, and I bade the family a hearty adieu. Sook followed me into the passage, asking if I would accept a geranium leaf. I took it, and tried to smile. Thus encouraged, the mammoth maid became emboldened to further wooing.

"Mr. Beans," said she, "would you feel insulted if I offered you a pair of socks I knit for you since I heard you wuz coming to Doodle Town?"

"Why, no, Sook; I have on several occasions received socks from members of my congregation, and have always appreciated them."

She handed me the footwear smiling a good-night, and hoping I would have pleasant dreams.

Wearied and worn, I followed John Adams Shoestrings to my room, climbing a ladder to get there. It was a loft, called by the family the "company's room." In one end were stored away cotton seed and fodder; in the other stood a rickety bed, on which slept a dog. John Adams left me alone, requesting me to "let 'em know if you want anything." To which I replied that I never expected to want anything again as long as I lived.

My first preparation for the night's rest was to

make friends with my new roommate, who seemed a little suspicious of my movements. I unraveled one of the socks Sook had just given me, and having gathered up the four corners of the spread, which I securely fastened with the thread, I let my canine acquaintance down through the window. Then I went to bed wondering whether most preachers had so hard a lot, whether they met with families like the Shoe-strings, with characters like Sook, and whether they had to sleep in a loft, and have a fight with a dog to get possession of the bed.

And then, after I had gotten possession of the bed, the brute that I had ejected set up a most doleful howling underneath my window. He doubtless was expatiating to his fellow-canines of the neighborhood regarding the inhuman monster that had sent him adrift into the night to find a bed as best he could. In dog language the things he said about me for the space of an hour were simply tremendous in their eloquence and force. Sleep was out of the question until I had silenced him. So I hunted about for a weapon. Nothing suggested itself save a huge iron frying-pan I found stowed away in the corner with some other cast-offs from the kitchen. Taking careful aim out of the window with this I hurled it at him. There was a succession of short, painful yelps and then silence. I shook hands with myself and again went to bed.

I then tried to sleep, but alas! it was impossible. I closed not my eyes the whole livelong night. The chinchies attacked me in droves; they fought me; they ate me, they nearly killed me; and I found no relief until the dawn of day. As I came down to breakfast,

Sook, appareled in her best garments, brought me her album, with the request to write in it an original poem. My muse being prolific, I indited the following ode; and but for the unsentimental breakfast bell, I think I would have filled out the album:

AD SOOKIAM.

O maiden fair, thy golden hair,
Thy crimson cheeks, thy ringlets rare,
Thy laughing eyes, thy apple pies,
Thy heav'nly name, thy bottled dyes,
Thy hundred charms, thy dimpled arms,
Thy acres broad, thy country farms,
Thy slender neck, thy father's check,
Thy hand of snow, that holds a peck,
Thy glitt'ring gold, thy wealth untold,
O cherub fair! O spirit bold!
Can ne'er requite the hapless fight
I waged against the bugs last night.
Now maiden fair, thy album take,
And take as well thy trusty broom;
And from the cracks the chinchies rake,
Before thoud'st wed a luckless groom.

At family prayer Shoestrings handed me a Patent Office Report for the Bible. I read two paragraphs from the national gospel: one on "How to raise hogs," and the other on "The best method of exterminating vermin," and prayed to be delivered from the terror by night, and from the pestilence that walketh in darkness.

I understand Mrs. Shoestrings is wondering why I haven't been back. I'm not.

SENNACHERIB TONGS WEDS

Chapter XXII.

ONE dreamy evening in April, the mail brought me a letter, which explains itself:

MUDVILLE, April 17.

REV. H. BEANS.

Dear Sir: The object of this letter is to inform you that I am to be married on Wednesday night, 30th inst. The honor of performing the ceremony is conferred on yourself. We want the job done up in the best style, as there will be a big crowd and an abundance of intelligence present—people of our stamp, you know, do things on a grand scale and have to have a grand show. No ordinary affair would accord either with our rank or family record, for we are descended from the first families of the State, and move in the upper stratum of Mudville.

Now, sir, I hope you will allow me to make a suggestion or two without taking offense. Please come in most fashionable shape, wearing a broadcloth suit and kid gloves. Most of the gentlemen will have beavers. On arriving at Mudville, put up at the Spring Chickens House, until called for. Remember, everything must be first-class.

Respectfully yours, SENNACHERIB TONGS.

It was now that hope loomed up before me, that double rainbows bedecked all the clouds of heaven, and that the world was bright with the implied prom-

ise of Sennacherib Tongs. Mr. Tongs' letter was the basis of my hope. Having never married a couple, I had no experience in the fee business, and congratulated myself on having a case of rank and wealth as an initiation. Of course, anyone, not hopelessly besotted with ignorance, would understand at a glance that Sennacherib Tongs was a gentleman of liberal culture, magnificent affluence, and generous bestowments. The brilliancy of the approaching wedding dazzled me. Broadcloth suits, kid gloves, beavers! I saw, in the prospect, maidens clad in silk, and giddy throngs reeling in luxury. Tables groaned under rare and costly viands. I saw the bride robed in gold, and the bridegroom staggering under jewels. A thousand bridesmaids smiled before me under the gilded arches of a granite mansion. These were the things I beheld in my vision. And these were the things for which I sought to part with my money:

Suit of broadcloth.....	\$27 00
Kid gloves.....	1 75
Beaver, two-storied.....	8 00
Silk cravat, striped and spotted.....	75
Patent leather shoes.....	4 50
Silk handkerchief.....	50
Watch chain, best quality of brass...	15
Purse, extra size to contain fee.....	1 00

Total expenses for marriage.....\$43 65

I bought the goods on credit, promising to pay the cash immediately on my return. It was my desire to meet Sennacherib's wishes as nearly as possible, since I expected him to pay handsomely for my pains. My next care was to interpret his request—"please come

in most fashionable shape." I had never given much attention to such shapes, and found considerable difficulty in getting the information I wanted. At that time, the most fashionable shape for women was "the Grecian bend," but it was not so clear what was the proper form for men. As I traversed the streets, or rather the street, of Doodle Town, since there was but one, I closely observed the attitude of the most fashionable men. But they were all different. One looked like a toad and another like an ape. Still others like whisky barrels, fence-rails, pumpkins stuck on knitting-needles, gimlets, corkscrews, and walking clothes-frames. None of these, however, suited me, nor seemed the proper thing for a wedding, so I struck an attitude and took a shape of my own, with my head thrown back at an angle of forty-seven degrees, my hair pompadoured, my repose of face broken only by a joyous grin, my body erect with legs two feet apart at the bottom, and the general appearance that of a man who had swallowed a bank.

Rigged in my finery, in superb shape, seated on Bucephalus, I set out for Mudville in high glee, somewhat embarrassed, however, to know how to accept in a graceful manner without betraying the least eagerness, the splendid remuneration that would be offered me by Tongs. I thought it most probable Sennacherib would either fling his purse at me, with the command to help myself to satiety, or else summon me by an escort of lordly grooms into his private office and hand me in a royal way a check that would break a couple of ordinary banks.

After two days and a half of weary riding under a

relentless sun, I reined up my foaming steed in front of the Spring Chickens House, where I found a ragged urchin waiting to conduct me to the residence of the bride. I should like to give here a description of the hotel, but I have never seen a dictionary that contained a single word that would give the slightest conception of it, or of any of its parts. I shall only say for the benefit of the traveling public, if night overtakes you in the vicinity of Mudville, select a respectable fence-corner, turn a kerosene barrel over yourself, and take the chances outside rather than roost with the Spring Chickens.

"Foller me, boss; I'll take you dar," said the negro boy who met me, conscious of the dignity of his mission. He rolled the whites of his eyes at me a time or two and darted off before my mule. When I had proceeded about half a mile out of town, my tawny guide halted on one foot, whistling a negro jig before a double log hut that stood on the roadside. Several horses, in apparent need of repairs, and a few rickety buggies, stood about the door, rendering the scene neither impressive nor imposing.

"Go on!" said I, to the sable lad, impatiently; "I don't care to stop at a stable when I'm dressed for a wedding. Go on!"

"Dis is de residence of de bride's fodder," he rejoined, whereupon I sighed. In a moment Mr. Tongs, my bridegroom, came out to meet me at the gate, as gorgeously appareled as a peacock.

"Mr. Beans, I wish to see you a moment privately," said he, in confidence.

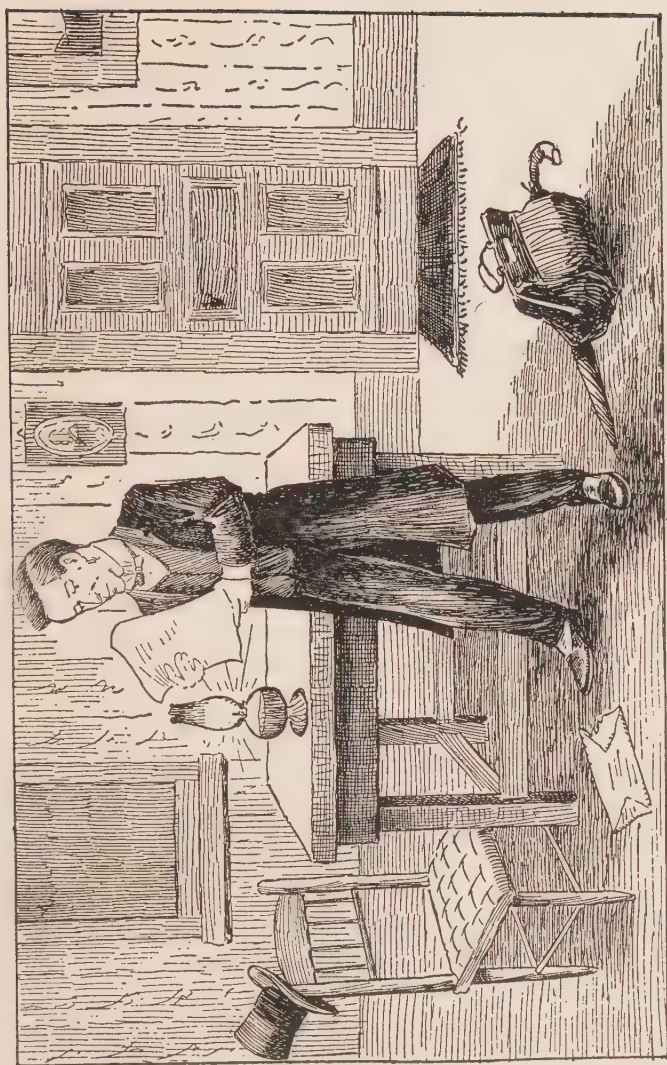
"Certainly, sir," replied I, thinking matters were

moving financially in the right direction, and involuntarily placing my right hand on my new purse. On turning the corner of the yard fence, Sennacherib stopped gracefully, and after the manner of a king, drew from his pocket an enormous envelope, apparently well-filled, and deposited it in the palm of my grateful hand. I bowed low in acknowledgment.

"Eureka!" thought I. In the upper left corner were printed these suggestive words, "Office of Register of Deeds." Ah! I understood it now. If the yellow wrapper did not contain a handful of \$100 bills, it at least contained a deed to a house and lot in Mudville, or a suburban farm. I did not care to evince a carnal mind by looking into the envelope, but carelessly shoved it into my inner pocket, as if I were used to such things.

The ceremony was performed in a very happy style by a very happy man, who at once left Mudville for more familiar parts. I did not dare to open my valuable package on the way, for fear that some one on the highway should discover my good fortune and render me liable to robbery. I reached my boarding place in Doodle Town at 9 P.M., and, after a hasty supper, retired to my room to have my rejoicing alone. I bolted the door and then locked it. I shut the windows after securely fastening the blinds. Then I lowered the curtains. Next I stuck a wad of paper in the keyhole and lighted the lamp. Finally I took out my treasure, opened the envelope, and behold! it was a marriage license.

Three weeks passed by, and then His Excellency, S. Tongs, made request through the mail for a certifi-



"FINALLY I TOOK OUT MY TREASURE, OPENED THE ENVELOPE, AND BEHOLD! IT WAS A MARRIAGE LICENSE."

cate of marriage, saying, "I have gotten a good bargain, and I want it certified, you know. Let it be something handsome, and in most fashionable shape. Give us a sample of your best style; you understand what sort of people we are, Beans."

"Yes," said I to myself, "I understand. This is the same Tongs; no improvement, no repentance, no conscience, the same brassy Tongs. Certainly he shall have a certificate of marriage." Whereupon I prepared one for him of which the following is a copy:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that one Sennacherib and a certain Polly Muggins became by marriage a pair of Tongs on April 30 in the city of Mudville.

This is to certify further, that I made no charge against the said S. Tongs and the unsaid P. Muggins for uniting them in matrimony. I donated my five days spent in making the round trip, which, at the rates of a common cobbler would have been only \$5.00; I gave the service of Bucephalus, worth not more than \$3.75; I performed the ceremony free; I contributed \$2.50 required for my wayfare along the route; I made a present of 10 cents to the negro boy for valuable guidance rendered; I took no account of other expenses demanded by the aforesaid Tongs' stipulations; for I can borrow enough money to keep my creditors from arresting me.

I still further certify that when curious people, who have discovered that there was no fee in the case, contend that Tongs couldn't pay his taxes, that he was broke, and that he married to get help, I always state that I made no charge; that I gave my time, my mule, my services, and my money; that I have no bill against Tongs; and that if I were summoned to his deathbed, there would be no charge for my time, service, or mule; while all expenses would be donated in so worthy a cause, and the funeral would be without fee.

Given under my hand and seal without charge or fee.

H. BEANS.

In one round seven days, a registered letter, post-marked "Mudville," made me richer by \$11.35—the sum of the figures named in my certificate.

And as I looked at this my first real fee for the consolidation of two hearts and lives into one, I wondered when the consolidation process was going to happen to Polytechnic and me. It was the full swing of Springtime. Flowers were everywhere—along the wayside, in the meadow, on the hills, in the woods, growing in pots, opening in vases, blooming on maidens' cheeks. Wreaths of beauty, songs of joy, scenes of glory everywhere! Oh, that I were married! Hadn't I the hardest luck in the world?

I BECOME A MARRIED MAN

Chapter XXIII.

I SAT in my room in my home at Shakerag pondering, as I always did before undertaking any great or momentous adventure. The sum of my cogitations was most joyful. Yes, said I, to myself, Moses was the meekest man, Samson was the strongest, Methuselah the oldest, Solomon the wisest, but Heredity Beans is by long odds the happiest. Sure enough? Yes, this Wednesday, the 15th day of June; this is the day Polytechnic Campbell chose as the one on which she would become Mrs. Heredity Beans. The marriage moment is to be eight o'clock in the evening. Just think of it!! At that hour she will be forever merged into another; Polytechnic Campbell will depart and Mrs. Beans arrive. At eight o'clock—let's see, what time is it now? Great lightningrods, it is six already! Only two hours of sixty minutes each—that's one hundred and twenty minutes—left before the wedding. Hurrah for the Beans family and three cheers for its greatest member, the Reverend Heredity! Hurrah for—

Bang! Bang! Bang! Who's knocking at the door? "Come in," I yelled, and the door opened. In walked the church treasurer, Mr. Squeeze. He wore his most financial smile and bore in his pudgy fist his

monthly report. I knew what that meant and my hilarity went down like the mercury in the bottom of a thermometer out of which the bottom had dropped. He was come to owe me my salary—and this my wedding-night, too. I sighed and Mr. Squeeze deposited before my eyes his account of the church's dealings with me. It said:

PASTOR'S SALARY ACCOUNT.

1 bu. black-eyed peas.....	\$ 0 60
1 bu. corn.....	75
2 loads fodder.....	80
1 load shucks.....	15
1 speckled rooster.....	30
3 ganders.....	1 50
2 drakes.....	70
5 strings red pepper.....	60
2 bu. onions.....	1 50
1 pair goats.....	4 00
1 half doz. grindstones.....	5 00
2 tomcats, warranted mousers, extra stripe on tails..	3 36¾
1 sheepskin for saddle.....	50
1 pk. peanuts.....	45
1 pair knit suspenders.....	50
1 corn-cob, extra size for pipe, red.....	05
1 pair shoe-strings, goat skin.....	05
3 comforts, 75 cents each.....	2 25
30 pair socks, at 12½ cts. per pair.....	3 75
1 hickory walking-stick.....	20
1 bundle quill toothpicks.....	10
1 corkscrew (not the Beans type).....	15
1 second-hand curry-comb.....	30
Cash	1 60

Total amount due to June 15.....\$29 16¾

When I had perused the above bill of lading, the

treasurer handed me the \$1.60 in cash—mostly pennies—remarking as he did so, “Old Doodle Town is true to her obligations.” Yes, thought I, as some men count truth; and looking through my little window, I turned my ophthalmics toward Job’s Coffin, unconsciously whistling,

I want to be an angel

For Polytechnic was already one. Then, with the magnanimity of a man that had approached angeldom, I returned the bill to the treasurer with the suggestion that he send the invoice and the goods to the Orphan Asylum.

I walked calmly and slowly out into the back yard, and took a seat on the root of a red-oak tree. Then I soliloquized. I shall in a few minutes become a double man. I happily shall become the slave of a cherub; to her I will surrender the freedom of my will, the control of my money, the exercise of my brains, the use of my time, the love of my heart, and the service of my mule, on the sole condition that she make me do as I please. “Abandon hope, ye that enter here;” “Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness! This is the state of man.”

Then I solemnly returned to the little room that I had occupied before accepting work at Doodle Town, and located for half an hour before the looking-glass, trying to make an ugly phiz appear respectable. If I could have had another half hour, I think I would have done it, but the time was up for my departure to Coon Hollow. I tied my cravat hastily (I wonder why a man is always in a hurry on his wedding-day, when he has so many years to prepare beforehand),

put on my coat, drew on my kids, jumped into my father's old buggy, and applied a royal hickory to Bucephalus, as a necessary part of the programme.

How it sped! I don't mean Bucephalus, but time. It was already nearly eight o'clock, while I was still several miles from my journey's end. My beast had not caught the spirit of the occasion, for he was unusually slow. In order to make better progress, I stood up, holding the reins firmly in one hand, and grasping the rod of discipline in the other, and sang, as my mule assumed an enforced gallop, the following stanzas of an old nursery rhyme:

I love my mammy,
I love my daddy,
I love my sweetheart
Better'n anybody.

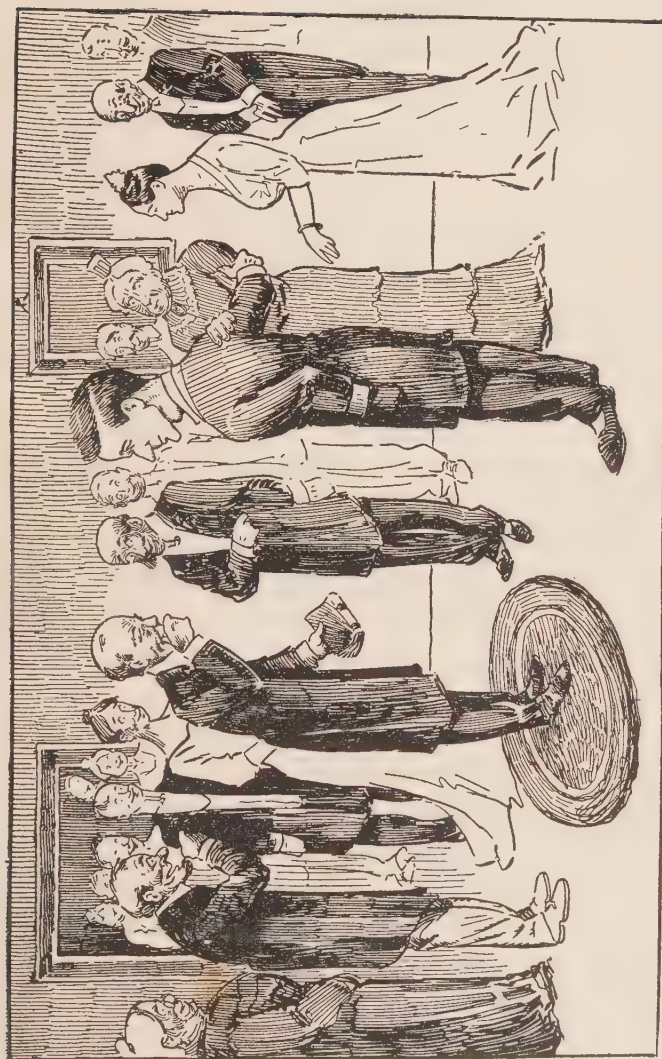
The rain come wet me;
The sun come dry me,
Take care, ugly girl,
Don't come nigh me.

As I drove through the main street of Toadville, I had not forgotten to make proper arrangements to celebrate the glad occasion toward which I moved. Putting the reins around my neck, and seizing mother's dinner bell in one hand, and a cow bell in the other, I started the wedding music, making all the joyous fuss and all the hymeneal tintinnabulations that these instruments could produce. The people flocked to the street, boys stood on gateposts, maidens looked out of windows, Toothpick Wheazles stood on the post office steps, dogs barked and howled, cows lowed, the crowd cheered, my bells rang, and—Bucephalus

ran away. It was a most unpropitious time for an accident, but mules have not a very nice sense of propriety, and as a result, my buggy was turned over and I was left in a wayside ditch, which fortunately was dry. When I crawled up to the road again, Bucephalus was grazing twenty-five yards from me, as if nothing had happened. I righted the vehicle (which seemed not to be damaged) and again went on my happy way.

Arriving at Coon Hollow a little late, I found everybody waiting but myself. Indeed I was not ready by several minutes. In my exertion to bring Bucephalus to a proper discharge of his duty, I had burst irreparably my right glove. Now this may seem a small matter to a man who is not about to be married; but when it's after the hour for the "solemnization of matrimony," and all are faultlessly gloved, it is quite a serious matter to the bridegroom. There being no space for deliberation, I put the left glove on my right hand, though the little finger wasn't a perfect fit for my thumb, stuck my left hand into my pocket, holding my arm akimbo for Polytechnic's clasp—and was ready for the fray.

The preacher was standing in front of the fireplace, and the spectators had taken their position on each side of the room, looking wisely at each other, and occasionally smiling. In my haste, and in the darkness of the hall in which the bridal party formed, I somewhat unceremoniously grabbed what I thought was the bride, and against her earnest remonstrance and most emphatic protestation, which I took to be but a manifestation of excessive modesty and embar-



"I SOMEWHAT UNCEREMONIOUSLY GRABBED WHAT I THOUGHT WAS THE BRIDE."

rassment, dragged her before the clergyman. For some reason, the minister was unable to begin the ceremony, and was convulsed with secret laughter, which I attributed to the attitude my gloveless hand had to assume, but the others, too, had caught the humorous fit—some of them leaning against the wall, shaking; others stuffing their handkerchiefs down their throats, wheezing. Just then I chanced to look up, and behold! it was Mrs. Campbell. The mistake was soon corrected, and Polytechnic, standing with me before the hymeneal altar, became my wife.

This was too much for me. Glory had gotten ripe. Livingston relates that Sekwebu, an African savage, could not endure the splendor of the vessel on which he embarked for England, and, overcome by the wonders of European civilization, his overtaxed mind gave way, and at the first landing the untutored pagan slid down the anchor cable into the sea, never to be seen again. Marriage had somewhat the same effect on me. I was dazed. Polytechnic had just vowed in the presence of witnesses to be mine so long as we both should live. Every ringlet of her beautiful hair, every eyelash, and every filament of her eyebrows, all forever mine! This exceeded even the utmost reach of my imagination; so raising my hands toward the ceiling, I sat down in the middle of the floor and laughed.

Next morning, the happiest mortal on whom ever shone the quenchless sun, with Polytechnic by my side, chirping like a bird, I started off to Doodle Town. Bucephalus himself seemed mirthful, as sweetly sped the morning hours. Every tree was a prophet of joy; every blade of grass a poem; every

flower a benediction; and every rippling brook a choir of celestial symphonies. A trifle after twilight, we arrived at Doodle Town; where, in the little cottage I had rented, the brethren and sisters awaited us with greetings of joy. We found the table nicely spread and an excellent meal ready.

After tea was over, I heard a terrible hullabaloo at the front door; and on opening it discovered, to my great astonishment, an army of besiegers, bearing in their hands an indescribable variety of bundles, boxes, and bags. Onward rushed the invaders, until passage, parlor, and dining-room were full. I sought seats for the great multitude; but alas! I had but three chairs to my name, besides a spittoon and a blacking-box, all of which I freely offered for public use. Polytechnic, with that wondrous instinct of woman, set to work dispassionately to arrange the generous bestowments of our friends, as if nothing unusual had happened. Not so with me. Carried away with gratitude to the unexpected visitors, and feeling it incumbent upon me to "make a few remarks," I gracefully—Polytechnic says it was graceful—mounted a lately-arrived barrel of flour and discoursed.

"Dearly beloved brethren," said I, "with hearty thanks for your unexpected and unspeakable goodness, allow me to hope that prosperity commensurate with your charity may return in ample showers on your heads, and that my marriage may prove as great a public blessing as private. Moreover—" here the head of the half-filled barrel fell in, and my oratory came to an abrupt pause, all hands agreeing, however, that the speaker was very floury.

A PASTORAL VISIT

Chapter XXIV

WHEN Aristotle Squat, one of my flock, passed away, of course, the Squat family went into deep mourning, adapting the latest fashions to the blackness of darkness. If the broken-hearted love darkness rather than light, and think they can retain the memory of the dead better in the black folds of a dress or in the ebon meshes of a veil, and at the same time, with a degree of philanthropy, encourage the art of the *modiste*, it would seem nobody's business but their own. Everything about the Squat home and garb was solid black—black as an intensified crow. Black dresses, black collars, black bonnets, black earrings and hairpins, black toothbrush, black-edged cards, envelopes, and handkerchiefs, a black dog, and a black cat. This is first-class, deep mourning, highly respectable and proper, and reminds people that the family has had a funeral at their house—and that's worth considerable.

This state of things lasted with Mrs. Squat six weeks, and then a lilac flower bloomed in her bonnet, and spotted dresses took the place of black. The spots, tiny at first, kept getting larger and larger, until the black disappeared, and the mourner wore bright colors again.

As I was going down to the post office in Doodle Town one morning, I chanced to meet Mrs. Squat—whose tongue wagged six times while her brain wagged once—decked in flounces, feathers, and flowers, as happy as a lark when he carols his grateful song in a cloudless sky. Alas, poor Squat! The grass had not yet performed its kindly offices over his grave, nor had the neighbors ceased to speak of his last illness—but his memory with his wife was no more.

“Why, Mr. Beans!” exclaimed the happy widow, in surprise, as she confronted me on the sidewalk.

“Why, Mrs. Squat!” said I, in equal astonishment, though from a different cause.

“Mr. Beans,” said she; “I’m goin’ to be honest with you, because you are my pastor, and the only spiritual adviser I have, now that dear, sainted Mr. Squat is dead an’ gone. Yes, Mr. Beans, I must speak my mind plainly, if you does be a preacher; for I have learned by sad experience that preachers is humant as well as other folks, and is jest as liable to faults as us who don’t make sich pretensions in spiritual things. I must say, Mr. Beans, I’ve been thinkin’ mighty hard of you for not comin’ to see me oftener in my deep, terrible affliction since I’ve been left a lone and forsaken widow. Poor Mr. Squat breathed his last breath of life nine weeks ago yestiddy, an’ you hain’t darkened my door but twict in that time—an’ I a poor, afflicted, feminine widow!”

“My dear madam, you show affliction as lightly as any one I ever saw. I am sure, if affliction is a disease, you will speedily and permanently recover. You

are convalescing grandly now. I am not conscious of having neglected you; on the contrary, I have paid you really more attention than your case demanded, calling several times when you were either visiting or witnessing a baseball match."

"But my poor, fatherless children are at home now sick. My Tom has the toothache, an' Peggy has the scratches. An' you ain't been nigh 'em, Mr. Beans!" sighed the widow, reproachfully.

"Madam," said I, somewhat impatiently, "sick children need either a nurse or a physician more than a minister, and I presume you are now going for Dr. Fyddlestycks. If so, you can return at once to give attention to the children, and I shall notify the doctor."

"Now, Mr. Beans, don't scold me," said the widow, coquettishly. "Don't scold me; for I must tell the truth: I have been worried and pestered by a set of young folks, till I consented to jine 'em in a picnic to-day. Now pray don't scold me, Mr. Beans."

"You are to be pitied rather than scolded, madam. For the sake of decency, go home and take off your gaudy riggings, scrape the paint off your face, empty your bottle of hair dye, wash the children, and say your prayers."

But the gay little widow of poor Squat seemed not to be seeking advice that day, and sped away to join a band of revelers. Poor Squat! dead, buried, and forgotten! Nine weeks—just nine weeks—and the desolate, weeping, broken-hearted wife is as active as the busy bee, seeking another to take poor Squat's place. Again I say, poor Squat!

Not more than two weeks elapsed before I took oc-



"FOR THE SAKE OF DECENCY, GO HOME AND TAKE OFF YOUR GAUDY RIGGINGS, . . . WASH THE CHILDREN, AND SAY YOUR PRAYERS."

casion to call on the relict of the lamented Squat. She met me at the door with the usual list of complaints, bewailing her sad loss in the demise of poor Squat.

"Well, Mr. Beans, have you come at last? Who would av thought it? I was sure you had forgotten me! If I wuz rich es some of 'em, you'd er been here afore this, I 'lowed to Mr. Gripens t'other day."

At the mention of the harmonious name of Gripens the remainder of poor Squat blushed as innocently as a girl of forty. Only eleven weeks, but Gripens was hopeful, and the widow trustful.

"Mrs. Squat," said I, in an authoritative voice, "I have come this evening, not to make a social call, but for pastoral visitation." The widow looked serious. "I wish you to summon all the children to the sitting-room, that we may spend the evening in religious exercises." The hostess cleared her throat as if about to choke.

The children were soon brought, each reluctantly taking possession of a corner of the room, for fear I might be carnivorous. As the mother returned through the back porch, I heard her whisper softly and pathetically to some one there.

"It's nobody but that horrid preacher," I heard her say, "I don't know what he wants always to come pokin' here for, anyhow. But he won't stay long; just wait a few minutes, Mr. Gripens."

I thought I understood enough of human nature to read in the widow's countenance the fact that I had interrupted a most interesting interview between herself and the gentleman on the porch. It was clear to my mind that matters were approaching a crisis in the

way of popping the question, if indeed the question had not already been popped. At all events, I have seldom had so good an opportunity to divert myself, and I used it to the best advantage.

"Mrs. Squat," said I, in truly pastoral manner, "it has been some time since I conversed with you on spiritual things, and inasmuch as your heart has been greatly softened and mellowed by adversity, I should like you to relate your Christian experience since the decease of your lamented husband. I may be able to help you."

The "crushed" relict put her scented handkerchief to her tearless eyes, as if too grieved to speak, conscious that Gripens was listening eagerly, and would not be likely to appreciate an exaltation of poor Squat.

"Ah! madam," said I, in a loud voice, so that Gripens could hear distinctly, "I see that you loved that man as you can never love another. Yes, Mrs. Squat, you will never look upon his like again, and you will no doubt be faithful enough to his memory never to marry."

I could hear Gripens twisting in his chair furiously. Mrs. S. spoke not, and I continued:

"I assure you, madam, I am delighted to know, from present indications, notwithstanding a current rumor, that you are wise enough to view a proposition of marriage with disfavor, if not with disgust; for you will have all your energies taxed to care for your children. And, too, you have gotten to that age when the question of matrimony should be irrelevant. I suppose you will soon have an appropriate tombstone erected to the memory of poor Squat."

Here Gripens' chair slipped, but the poor fellow soon recovered himself.

"Now," said I, "I shall catechise the children a little, to see if they are proficient in Biblical truths. Poker," continued I, addressing myself to a half-wild boy in the corner behind me, "please repeat the Ten Commandments."

"Never seed 'em, sir," replied Poker, putting his hands in his pockets.

"Then, Peggy, be kind enough to call over the plagues of Egypt."

"I dunno, sir, 'cep'n' hit was the smallpox an' yaller fever; or might be, the cholery."

"Well, Tom, perhaps you can tell me who were the twelve sons of Jacob."

"He hain't got but seven sons and two gals," said Tom.

"Which Jacob do you mean, Tom?"

"Ole Uncle Jake Gripens," replied he.

More twisting and turning on the back porch, while inside the little widow was gasping for breath.

"Snap," said I, turning to the youngest boy, "perhaps we can do better with the New Testament. Now name, like a smart boy, the twelve Apostles."

"I dunno zackly what you's atter," snapped Snap, licking out his tongue and drawing a long breath: "but ole Uncle Jake Gripens has got er sow down in the meadow with twelve pigs, but I dunno what thar name is. Uncle Jake says how he's gwine to give me an' Poke an' Tom one when him an' ma gits married."

"Snap," said I, with fatherly tenderness, "never, even in jest, use such shocking language again. You

astonish me. I know, my dear boy, you are only trying to tease your bereaved mother, to get her mind off of her recent sorrow; but some things should not be mentioned; and under the circumstances, marriage is one of them. Consider, my boy, your mother's gray hairs and broken heart; then, too, you should not speak so lightly of dear old father Gripens. Poor old man, he is not long for this world! Now, Mrs. Squat, please light the lamp; I wish to read a couple of passages from the Scriptures."

I turned to the prophets and read about the valley of dry bones; then to the epistles, and read Paul's chapter on widows, and several portions having reference to the training of children. I heard, as I closed the Bible, a faint sound on the porch, which indicated, on the part of Gripens, an expectation of my speedy departure. But I had been remorselessly taken to task for pastoral neglect of this home, and, so far as it lay in my power, I purposed to make amends.

"Tom, my boy, please put up Bucephalus," said I. "I have found the evening so pleasant that I have decided to stay to tea."

The widow wilted; and in a moment I descried in the deepening twilight, as I looked through the partially-opened blinds, the bent and disconsolate form of Gripens making for the yard gate. Mrs. Squat has never, so far as I am aware, complained of my not paying her sufficient pastoral attention since.

Gripens doesn't speak to me. And Mrs. Squat still is Mrs. Squat.

C U P I D G O N E M A D

Chapter XXV.

AND now I must tell you how I survived a marriage epidemic that struck Doodle Town two years after I took charge of the Eden Church, in that delectable hamlet. The visitation was short but sharp. While it lasted it was terrific in its force. What started the disease is not known; indeed, no one had the temerity to even attempt a solution of the problem, but I here make affidavit that, once started, the plague spread with remarkable rapidity through the region roundabout Doodle Town. It seized chiefly upon widows and widowers, old people and children, bachelors and ancient girls, bringing them in grotesque pairs to the hymeneal altar. Just why such ill-matched persons wish to get married is one of the world's great puzzles—but I accept the mystery and rule philosophizing out of order. And so to resume the narrative:

One night, as I sat in my study meditating over the mysteries of life, a quick tap at the door aroused me from my dreamful thoughts, and shook shadowy problems from my brain.

"Come in!" said I.

And there entered a maiden lady, on whose brow had sported the joyous zephyrs of at least sixty-five summers, followed by a timid youth of seventeen.



"AND THERE ENTERED A MAIDEN LADY, ON WHOSE BROW HAD SPORTED THE JOYOUS ZEPHYRUS OF AT LEAST SIXTY-FIVE SUMMERS, FOLLOWED BY A TIMID YOUTH OF SEVENTEEN."

"Is your son sick?" inquired I, scanning the pale face of the boy.

"Mercy, no!" exclaimed the ancient girl, in amazement and horror. "How odd you are, Mr. Beans!" (putting her fan to her chin and giggling). "I want you to marry me."

"I'm already married, madam; and should I ever enter into matrimony again, I am reasonably satisfied that I should select a lady without a son quite so large as this lad. So please excuse me."

"Mr. Beans, you do not exactly understand Miss Oldfossil," here interposed the youth. "She and I are to be married, as you will see from this license."

I held my breath for a few moments in astonishment and consternation, not knowing whether to credit my sense or not, until I discovered that the law authorized the marriage of Mr. Young Jaybird to Miss Ann Oldfossil. I commanded the couple to stand before me, and summoned Polytechnic to witness the ceremony.

"Miss Oldfossil, I address you first," said I, most solemnly, "because you are the responsible contracting party, being, I presume, of age, and the perpetrator of this mockery of marriage. Of course, you knew from the time you began your attentions to this youth, that the material of which husbands are made was not in him, and that he never could rise superior to a third-rate husbandhood. For a moderate sum, you readily could have hired the lad to do your errands and make himself useful, thus securing his respect as well as his labor. He would make a model waiting boy, but as a husband he is sure to be a failure.

"The All-wise God never designed that such contrary interests and tastes should be united in wedlock, but that marriage should be a joy and a blessing, heaven's own benison, to both parties, and that they twain should be one flesh—one in hope, one in love, one in purpose and life. The laws of nature forbid that either you or this youth should entertain for each other marital love; and hence, they forbid you to marry. You wed him, either because you never had an opportunity to wed before, or because you want a lackey in your old age. He marries you because he is too lazy to work for his living, expecting you to die and bequeath him your property after a few months, or because he is by nature an idiot. So, therefore, he's either a knave or a fool. I cannot conscientiously perform the customary marriage service, but I can so unite you that the boy can get the property by law—the chief point of interest to him, I'm sure.

"Therefore, Miss Oldfossil, do you promise to take this child to be your adopted son, to protect, govern, feed, clothe, and nurse him, so long as ye both shall live?"

"I do!" resolutely.

"Mr. Jaybird, do you promise to take this old lady to be your grandmother, to pick up chips, make fires, mind the calf, follow, and obey her, so long as ye both shall live?"

"I do," faintly and with hesitation.

"Seeing ye have consented to live together as grandmother and grandson, I pronounce you a pair of lunatics. Suffer this word of exhortation, and then depart in peace: Be grateful, madam, to this infant for

consenting to serve you in your old age. Make him say his prayers and go to church, place him in a crib by your side o' nights, and occasionally reward his philanthropy with a sugar rag. You should die at the end of five years, so that he may get possession of the property that he will so dearly have won.

"As for you, Jaybird, be a dutiful child; help old granny make her tea, like a smart boy. And may a kind fate preserve you from approaching storms, volcanoes, and eathquakes. Amen."

"Take this fee, parson," mumbled Jaybird, poking a fifty-cent piece at me.

"Keep thy silver, son, and purchase a rattle whereon to cut thy wisdom teeth."

As the bridal party disappeared in the shadows of the night, Polytechnic, no longer able to restrain her risible tendencies, made vocal every corner of the parsonage. I myself never do so gross a thing as to laugh on such occasions, but I smiled audibly for half an hour, dislocating my spine at several important points. This was the beginning of our epidemic of marriageitis.

Next morning, bright and early, a dozen or more buggies drove up to the parsonage, with happy faces beaming from them. Of course, I did not see them, for I belong to that class of wise men who never take advantage of the sun, and that variety of birds whose ambition does not run in the direction of capturing the early worm. The news, however, was duly reported to me, and I soon met at the front door a company consisting of twenty-six persons—two middle-aged; the rest of all ages. I met them with a smile—

and by the way, one of the hardest things I am called on to do is to wear a perpetual smile. But I wore it.

"Good morning!" said I. "Fine day for a picnic! I see you've brought the Sunday school along. Sorry I can't join you, but really it will be impossible to-day, as I have an engagement in quite a different quarter. Fine day, though!"

All was still as death, and it seemed the most solemn squad of picnickers I ever beheld. The intense silence was at length broken by the man who was apparently the leader of the party.

"Parson," said he, bashfully, "this it not a picnic. It's somethin' more serious, parson."

"Ah!" sighed I, "I am the most unfortunate of mortals. I might have known from the array of vehicles that it was a funeral procession. Please pardon my obtuseness. Bring the corpse into the sitting-room, and we'll have service there."

"Parson," said the man, stammering, "it hain't no p-p-p-picnic nor f-f-f-funeral. Hit's er m-m-m-marriage! These young uns is ourn—thirteen mine, 'leben hern."

"Bless me!" said I, lifting my hands in astonishment. "I thought men paired off; I didn't know they swarmed. But without further comment, I pronounce you man and woman. I advise you to remove to some of the territories, rent a martin-box, and write a treatise on the woes of wedlock."

Two days later the marriage mania came to a focus. It was a custom in Doodle Town and vicinity for the marriage ceremony to be performed at the parsonage. This, so far as the preacher was concerned, was a

benevolent arrangement, since the fees on such occasions were considered by everybody—except the minister—as marks of vulgarity. So, after breakfast, on the day in question, a couple came to my study to be united in the bonds of matrimony. The man came hobbling up the steps, aided by a rude hickory stick on one side, and a handsome girl on the other. He consisted mainly of a wig, three molar teeth, two arms, one paralyzed, the other palsied; one leg, the other having been amputated in the war of 1812; and one glass eye. In addition to the attractions just named, he was deaf, and partly blind in the eye that remained; in a word, he was just such a man as the average girl would not fancy for a husband. But then, he had several hundred dollars invested in a western railroad company, and the name of being rich. This fact covered the multitude of his other shortcomings.

“Parson,” gasped the well-nigh exhausted veteran, “I wants you to marry me and this gal.”

“Sir,” said I, bawling in his deaf ear, “you are a relic of barbarism, and should be arrested and placed in the hands of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. You know well enough, sir, that this fresh but foolish girl never could, save for the hope of gain, tolerate such a decayed and rickety affair as yourself. There would be but one possible consolation for her, and that would be the hope of your speedy removal to another and distant clime. No, sir; if you wish to employ this girl as nurse, and will her your property, well enough; but as for the ridiculous farce of marriage, I’ll commit no such folly.”

"Child," said I, turning to the intended wife, "you have plenty of time to wait for a respectable offer of marriage. Go home and play with your dolls awhile, and never dream of marrying a funeral like this again. You cannot afford to spend the bloom of your life in fixing plasters on an old man's back, and taking him to pieces every night and putting him up every morning. No, child; take the remains of what was once a man to the undertaker's for measurement, and then, kindly leaving him at the apothecary's for repairs, depart in peace."

Next morning the marriage notice of the above-mentioned parties appeared in the "Doodle Town Times," 'Squire Grabfee officiating.

I am satisfied, after ample observation, that three-fourths of the girls of the present day, rather than be old maids, will consider favorably the attentions of a scarecrow, or marry a pair of tongs, if dressed in breeches. But that's none of my business.

A S A C K O F S O C K S

Chapter XXVI.

How did I happen to become the pastor of Toplofty Church in the city of Goalong? I was called, of course, but thereby hangs a tale, for it was more than three years after I preached my trial sermon to the members of Toplofty that the summons to me was extended. Actually, at the time I received it I almost had forgotten I ever had been in Goalong and the difficulties I had encountered in getting there and staying there. And thereby hangs another tale, to the telling of which I now address myself.

One fine, never-to-be-forgotten day I betook me to the Doodle Town post office to see what Uncle Sam's mail had in store for me—not that I received many letters, but that I always lived in expectation of getting a call to some big church in some big city, a call, indeed, to a field where my peculiar and great abilities (as estimated by myself, my wife, my father, and my mother) might have full swing. Some day, I felt, my merit must be recognized. And so on this day when I went to the post office and the postmaster handed me a letter bearing the imprint of "Toplofty Church, City of Goalong," I believed that at last it had come. With swelling chest and uptilting chin I marched out of the office to read my letter. It said:

CITY OF GOALONG, June 5.

REV. H. BEANS, DOODLE TOWN.

Dear Sir and Brother:

Toplofty Church is without a pastor, and I am instructed by the Board of Deacons to invite you to preach for us on the first Sabbath in July, with view to a call.

Your expenses will be arranged for, etc. Hoping to receive a favorable response, I am,

Yours fraternally, HARMONIOUS SING.

Ah, thought I, exultingly, Toplofty Church—in the city of Goalong—125,000 inhabitants—big town—I'm invited to preach by a board of deacons—what is a board of deacons? Well, no matter! I'm invited to preach—with a view to a call!

Such were the pleasing reflections that flitted on hope's golden wing through the realms of the inner man of the Reverend Heredity Beans. Immediately I rushed down the street, with elastic tread, to borrow a stamp to return a "favorable response." Ah me! I found no one to sympathize with me in my delirium of joy. Nobody could lend me a stamp. It is true, as I stopped in at the Slim Diet Hotel, Pollikins, the grocer, a capitalist in a small way, and a leading citizen of Doodle Town, offered to furnish a stamp if I would secure it by a mortgage on Bucephalus. Such a measure seemed disparaging to my faithful mule, and not altogether complimentary to myself; but, under the necessity that knows no law, the papers were formally drawn up and properly signed. My letter was soon in the office, assuring Mr. Harmonious Sing that I did not have the heart to decline the pressing invitation tendered me by the board of deacons.

Where is the man who can refuse the solicitations of a board of deacons representing a \$3,000 salary, when said man hasn't funds enough to mail a letter or buy a box of blacking?

My next care was to select a couple of my best sermons, and practice them. Accordingly, I sauntered off at early morn to a stretch of pasture land about a mile and a half from Doodle Town, where I retired to a cluster of trees, mounted a gum stump for a rostrum, lifted my eyes toward the rising sun, and began to let off. The words flowed like a wild mountain torrent as it sweeps on in thunders to the plain below, my voice waxed louder and louder, like the sea's deep roar when a storm is shrieking in the sky, while my gestures became with each burning sentence more fiercely sublime, culminating every ten minutes in a rhetorical and elocutionary fit.

At the conclusion of one of my noblest rhapsodies, I opened my bewildered eyes, and behold! a flock of sheep, attracted by my oratory, had gathered around me, and with ears bent forward and heads erect, were trying to take in the situation. Finding, however, that my eloquence was not seasoned with salt, my ungracious audience, wagging their tails, scampered off, bleating, "Bah! bah! bah!" Not altogether willing to admit that my graceless congregation had pulled the wool over my eyes, I am, nevertheless, constrained to confess that I returned home feeling somewhat sheepish.

But I was satisfied that I could preach for Toplofty. That was the least difficult question to be solved. I must have something to preach in when I go to so

great a place as the city of Goalong; for it would never do to mingle with polished throngs, arrayed in silk and satin and broadcloth, dressed in my old threadbare Sunday suit. Never! That's what Polytechnic said, anyhow.

"What shall I do for a new pulpit suit, Polytechnic?" said I to my little wife, who evidently was striving to solve the problem.

"Take up a collection," answered the little woman, thinking she had mastered the situation.

"Why! dove, a collection won't pay now for the wear and tear on the deacons' hats. Don't you remember that the collection last Sunday for foreign missions amounted to just five cents, and you contributed that? No; that will never do. We must mortgage or sell something. Do I own anything but you and Bucephalus?"

"Indeed you do, Red! You own a bright future," said the little woman, whose soul seemed to be made of sunshine. "And the day is not distant when you will move in the sphere for which God created you, and when our present poverty will vanish as a specter before substantial blessings."

I felt sad, but at length, concluding there might be some truth in my wife's prophecy, I asked: "How many pairs of socks have I in the garret?" For I had an idea I thought might settle my troubles.

"Red, what on earth are you thinking about?" laughed the hopeful but puzzled little wife.

"Never mind; how many?"

"Dear me; I don't know. There are a great many—about two trunkfuls I think—for you have received

most of **your** salary in socks for the last eight months. But, pray, what has started you off on socks?"

"I'm going to pay my way to the city of Goalong with them, and there get a suit of clothes on credit."

"Why can't you get it on credit here?" asked Polytechnic, recovering from a convulsion of laughter.

"Because I already owe every man in the town except the undertaker, and haven't the face to ask more indulgence," responded I.

So, hastily repairing to the garret, Polytechnic's whole face lighted up with merriment, her eyes sparkling with fun, we found the socks by actual count to number four hundred and seventy-nine pairs. This number I deemed sufficient to justify my taking the train for Goalong.

Bidding Polytechnic adieu, as she proudly exhorted me to do my best at Toplofty, I rode to the station and asked for a minister's ticket to Goalong.

"\$8.35," said the laconic man, as he handed me a ticket.

"Sir," said I, bashfully, "I have zeal and I have knowledge, but I have no money: I have, however, a sack of socks. Will you take pay in socks?"

The agent screwed his spectacles on his thin nose, leveled them at me, and sighed. At length, recovering from the shock, he gasped, "Where in whiskers did you come from, anyhow?"

"I am the Bishop of Doodle Town," said I, calmly.

"Who is the Bishop of Doodle Town?" inquired the agent, sarcastically.

"Myself," rejoined I, meekly.

"Who are you, then?"

"The Bishop of Doodle Town."

The thin-nosed man tried to get mad, but in spite of himself, he obeyed the better law of his nature, and broke out into a laugh.

"What would the railroad do with your socks?" said he.

"Wear them. They are good socks, home knit. Look at a pair."

The weary man examined the specimen pair languidly, and then passed them back to me, saying sympathetically, "I would like to accommodate you, but the railroad don't wear socks."

"Then buy them yourself," insisted I.

"How many pairs would it take to amount to \$8.35?"

"Well, let me see," said I, making a mental calculation; "at twelve and a half cents it would take about sixty-seven pairs."

"Whew!" whistled the agent; "I don't care to go into the wholesale sock business."

"But see here," said I, growing both serious and wise; "see here, agent, you are an important factor in the great railway business of this glorious land—the land of plenty and the home of liberty. This, sir, is heaven's favored clime, in whose liquid sunshine the great American eagle, on wings of fire, shrieks in the ears of the admiring universe 'E pluribus unum!' In this land, sir, the garden spot of the earth, the birth-place of genius, and the cradle of colossal railroads—in this land, sir, you live and of its heroic people are a component part. Sir, you are a man—and what would this world do without men? In the language of the

immortal poet, I say, calmly, deliberately, and emphatically, 'It couldn't navigate worth a cent!' It is in your power, sir, to carve your name on the topmost round of the ladder of benevolence, and to reap a golden harvest of fame. I implore you, sir, by the resplendent record of this great republic, to do something worthy of your country and of your forefathers."

The appeal was not in vain. The spellbound vendor of tickets, swelling out to those dimensions that become a citizen of this vast government, having adjusted his spectacles, put his thumbs under his suspenders, transferred his quid of tobacco to the other side of his mouth, and imagining himself to be a future president of a great railroad, if not of the United States, inquired eagerly, "What kin I do?"

"Do? Why, take these sixty-seven pairs of socks and send them as a generous gift to an orphan asylum; and generations yet unborn will breathe upon your memory an immortal benediction."

"Great Snakes! I'll take 'em," exclaimed the man of generous impulses and human tendencies.

My ticket paid for, I was soon on the panting iron horse, guarding the balance of my socks, and speeding hopefully on for the city of Goalong. The jocund hours (I believe that's the way the writers put it) sped on likewise, as I fancied the hearty reception I was to receive when the train stopped at my destination. I pictured the board of deacons rushing into the car, each striving to reach me first, while the choir stood on the platform, singing, "Welcome," or "See, the Conquering Hero Comes." I thought some vener-

able sire with flowing gray beard would take me in his arms, seat me in a coach drawn by four snowy steeds, and beseech me in mellifluous tones to accept a call to Toplofty Church. This was but a small part of the cordial welcome I imagined awaited me.

"City of Goalong!" drawled a dilapidated brakeman at last, in a high key.

The train stopped. No board of deacons rushed on. Oh! thought I, they are waiting for me to get off. So I lugged my sack of socks, the only purse I had, to the car steps, and jumped off. I heard no choir, nor did a gray-haired sire take me in his arms; not even did Harmonious Sing meet me to advise me where to stop.

But about forty eager Irish and negro hack-drivers met me cordially. No man can have "the blues" when he drops down in a large city, among a host of cabmen. Each yelled at me as if I were the only being of importance in the world. I could not hear my ears. One savage fellow laid violent hands on my purse—I mean my sack of socks—crying, "This way, sir! this way." Another had hold of my arm, leading me in an opposite direction, singing "All aboard for Sawdust Hotel!" Another swung to my coat-tail, declaring I had promised to ride in his 'bus, while a strapping African took quiet possession of my hat, and mounting his hack, shouted, "Dis way, boss!" I was determined not to ride in all the vehicles at one time, not only because I adhere philosophically to the motto, "United we stand, divided we fall," but because such a ride necessarily would be uncomfortable; and if I were carried to a dozen hotels simultaneously, my

board would be rather extravagant. So I asked the Irishman, who was about to dislocate my left arm, if he could give me a little advice.

"And be sure! Plenty of it, sir," said the son of Erin.

"Will you be kind enough to tell me how I can get myself together again?"

"And be sure! If you'll collect your thoughts, I'll be responsible for the balance, sir, and take you to the Sawdust Hotel chape."

"Hackman," said I, "I own but little of this world's goods, and as the Psalmist has remarked, 'I am poor and needy.' I am here by invitation of a board of deacons, to preach at Toplofty Church, as I suppose you of course have heard, and I would like to have ministers' rates, should I patronize you. What's the best you can do?"

"And be sure, sir! Step in. It will cost you little or nothing, sure!"

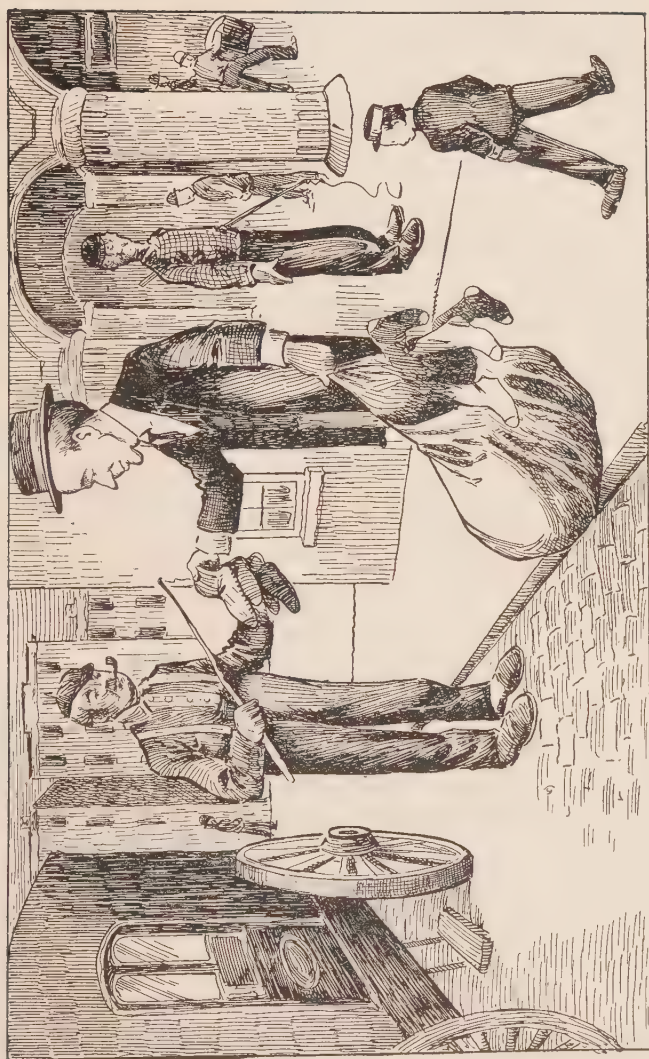
I stepped in and in a few moments Pat announced that we had arrived at the Sawdust Hotel.

"What's your bill?" inquired I, as an honest man, half suspecting the ruby-nosed Irishman would make no charge, in view of my ministerial avocation.

"And since you are a clergyman, sure I'll charge you but five dollars. Chape, sir!"

I sighed, at the same time impressing on Pat's mind a few thoughts respecting torment. Opening the mouth of my sack, I transferred five pairs of socks to Pat's possession, valuing them at a dollar per pair.

"Now, Pat, old boy," said I, to close the deal, "two pairs of these socks would have been a fair price for



"OPENING THE MOUTH OF MY SACK, I TRANSFERRED FIVE PAIRS OF SOCKS TO PAT'S POSSESSION."

the ride you have given me, but inasmuch as you are an honest fellow, and do not follow tricks common to gentlemen of your profession, I'll reward your piety by allowing you extra pay."

And therewith I hastened to the register, leaving Erin's son, notwithstanding my kindness, making vehement gestures with his fists, and speaking disrespectfully of me.

Of course, the first thing a philosopher does on arriving at a hotel, is to go to dinner. I am first, last, and all the time a philosopher, so the waiter promptly laid a paper by my plate, and put his ear on a parallel with my mouth.

"What's the matter?" said I.

The waiter made no reply, but pointed to the paper.

"I don't read advertisements when I'm eating!" said I, sternly.

"Dat's de bill of fare, sir," smiled the sable attendant.

"Look here, Scipio Africanus, have you the impertinence to present my bill before I have eaten a single mouthful? Can't you trust for ten minutes an ecclesiastic who is here by invitation of a board of deacons to preach with view to a call? Shocking! shocking!"

A shower of explanations followed, and I ate, after much tribulation, a dinner that I think will shorten my life six months.

I made it my first care after dinner to repair to a barber-shop to get shaved. I found the shop a most charming place, and the barber a most communicative and genial companion. It is said that there is no instance in history of a barber who was either melan-

choly or dumb. I firmly believe it. I think he knew enough about me in ten minutes to write exhaustive biographies of myself, my wife, and my grandparents. I attempted to answer patiently all of his interrogatories, and am satisfied the mental strain cost me at the lowest estimate two pounds of flesh.

After the inquisition was over, I inquired the extent of my obligation, which I learned was ten cents. I slipped benignly a pair of socks into the tonsorial artist's extended hand, and mingled with "the madding crowd's ignoble strife" once more. An hour afterwards, as I climbed up Central Square Monument, I espied afar down Locust Street a bareheaded man squeezing a hair-brush in one hand and holding the other just above his eyes, as he strained his vision in the direction I had gone. It was a most interesting sight, and I wondered what could be the matter.

As I was passing down a back street, my eyes fell on these words, printed in large capitals above a tent door:

THE WORLD'S GREATEST WONDER!

WALK IN!

Of course I walked in. Why not? I was raised in the country, and never saw many wonders, and here was a kind invitation to behold the greatest one in the world. So fine an opportunity of improving myself I assuredly did not intend to let slip; hence, commendably enough, I entered into the tent in search of information. Under the exciting influence of the hand-organ, for which I have always had more or less affec-

tion, my spirits rose to a noble height, when an undersized, fat, and filthy Dutchman, claiming to have no arms, seized a pen in his toes and wrote his name on a greasy slip of paper, which the same accomplished toe-writer poked at me, to be preserved forever as a sacred relic. On Joe Schwartz's name I placed my self-respecting foot, demanding an explanation.

"This is the only armless living man in either continent that can write his name with his toes. He is also the only man, living or dead, sir, who ever received a medal for toe-writing at the World's Fair," ejaculated the doorkeeper, demanding of me fifty cents.

"I don't imagine either continent is very proud of such a pig, and if he proposes to deceive people this way, the sooner he is sent on a polar expedition or placed in charge of some enterprising undertaker, the better."

The doorkeeper growled and the Dutchman swore, which latter fact proved he wasn't a gentleman.

"Fifty cents, sir!" demanded the offended innocent, stretching out his hand for filthy lucre.

"I thought, sir," said I, "I came in here under an invitation that precluded charge; but if I am mistaken in your honesty and sincerity, I'll gratify your avarice by meeting the demand with stoic firmness."

After I had delivered this fitting rebuke, I left a couple of pairs of socks with the showman, which caused some remarks I do not care to repeat, and soon I again was moving with the stream of busy humanity.

Having purchased the "Evening Times" from a newsboy at the next corner in the same way, I stepped aboard a street-car to return to the Sawdust Hotel.

This was in the days when trolley-cars were unknown and some of the horse-cars had no conductor, the passengers dropping their fare into a glass box. The car was of this sort. Seeing the driver was not permitted to put the fare in the box, I stepped forward to put it in myself. I succeeded in stuffing one sock in the box, when the driver pushed the door back and assumed a menacing attitude.

“And what are ye stuffin’ in there?”

“A pair of socks which I received for salary.”

“This company doesn’t take socks, sure, sir.”

“Then, Pat, if we can’t trade, let me off.”

The Irishman applied the brake vigorously, and I stepped off the car just opposite the door of the Sawdust Hotel, smiling.

And after I had entered the hotel and had been handed a telegram that had arrived for me I smiled some more, and indeed I kept on smiling all that day and the next. How I managed to preach to the members of Toplofty Church I cannot tell, but I know that I did so and went home. On the journey every once in a while I took from my pocket the telegram I had received and read it. It was from my mother-in-law, and it said:

Come home as soon as you have preached that sermon, for the baby has arrived.

Do you wonder that I smiled?

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Chapter XXVII.

DEAR reader, I wish I could make the next paragraph as incoherent as I felt when I reached home.

It was a boy and I instantly named him Wax. He had the usual number of fingers and toes, and only one head. He weighed ten pounds, seven ounces, and three drachms. He never had been surpassed in the American market. I was the happiest man on the habitable globe. 'Twas midnight, but I flew to the church and pealed the bell loud and long. The populace rushed out to see what was burning, for the church bell never spoke at that hour of night unless a fire had broken out. The fire company paraded the streets trying to locate the conflagration; aged men and matrons went about making diligent inquiry, and maidens hysterically screamed "Fire! Fire!" I told the people that it was not an alarm bell but a joy bell, whereupon all hands gathered around and congratulated me, despite the fact that the village had known the happy news for several days. But then, you see, I hadn't.

The next thing that demanded immediate attention was to get my deacons to telegraph the news to the President and to send a cablegram to Queen Victoria,

and other crowned heads of Europe. I did not like to disturb their rest, but it seemed necessary. Although the baby was three days old I had just arrived and just seen him. Besides, this event, so fraught with consequences to all people, should be known in the world's centers at once. But the deacons wouldn't spend the money. So I hastened back to the parsonage and spent the rest of the night standing over my son and heir and smiling at him. Cubic miles of bliss surrounded me, floods of delight swept over me, oceans of joy filled me, and actually I forgot all about Toplofty Church and the city of Goalong, the sermon, the call, the Toplofty board of deacons, and everything else. But I soon came back to earth and my senses and other things.

Two weeks flew by—not so happy; two months sped on—miserable! Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, that I might soar to the top of some venerable pine, and, perched upon a friendly limb, spend one comfortable hour! Yes, just one complete half-hour would suffice my needs.

"Oft in the stilly night," when the light burneth dim, the last ember freezeth, and the uncharitable winds unceremoniously butt up against my dwelling, a sweet, silvery voice singeth out: "Arise, Reddie dear; do take the baby and walk him to sleep. It soon will be light." About that time the thermometer of my zeal for babies sinks below zero, and I go bouncing up and down the room at the rate of ten miles an hour. At a period in the night watches when the vigilant cock croweth for the approach of morn, and when my arms are paralyzed and my toes icicles, I hand the

drowsy youngster back to Polytechnic, and sigh a sigh of relief.

"I do know, Red," she smiles and says, "you are the best husband in the world."

"I reckon I am!" I reply, taking up my long-deferred pilgrimage to the land of Nod. I think fathers deserve a great deal of credit. But they don't often get it.

After the novelty of the baby excitement wore off in the home of the Reverend Heredity Beans the minds of the infant's father and mother began slowly to come back to the things of real life, and among the first of these to be considered was the matter of my sermon at Toplofty Church. We waited for the call we expected to result from it, but the days and weeks and months went by without a word from the Toploftyites. Gradually, therefore, the thing was forgotten. But—

It was several years after the birth of Mr. Wax Beans, and there were a couple more of juvenile beauties at my house. My charge at Doodle Town had greatly prospered, though the church was not able to meet the growing demands of my family. This fact became painful and conspicuous whenever Wax wanted a pair of boots, Butter a dress, or Lima a doll. But Polytechnic, my household angel, never wanted anything. Still I had noticed for several weeks that a shade of sadness seemed to rest on her cheerful, hopeful face; and I inquired one day, on returning home from the post office the cause, for it was giving me uneasiness.

"Oh! nothing. I try to be always cheerful."

"Polytechnic, it has been evident to me for some time that you are troubled in mind. It is my wish that you tell me all."

"Red, we ought not to be unhappy. We have such a sweet family, and so much to be thankful for."

"You evade my question, Polytechnic. I hope you will not conceal longer from me the source of your grief."

"Oh!" burying her sweet face in her hands, "it is the children—the children!"

"Ah! I had divined the secret, but wanted to know from your own lips. I have never before been in a position to ask the question, but now I can offer relief. So you have been depressed because the children have not the advantages they should have, as well as clothing and food?"

"Yes; indeed I have! Wax has such a splendid mind, yet it seems we can't educate him; while all the children lack suitable clothing. I have ripped up your old coats for the boy, and my old calicoes for the girls, and still they are not properly clad. But I shall not complain, and have said what I have because you asked it."

"Polytechnic," then said I, unable to hold my secret any longer, "I have good news for you. Cheer up! Cheer up, for cherries are ripe."

I drew her near my side, while her bright eyes, dimmed by tears, turned upon me inquiringly. I was filled with joy.

"I have here," said I, drawing an envelope from my pocket, "a letter from the clerk of Toplofty Church, in the city of Goalong, tendering me a unanimous call,

at a salary of \$3,000, with parsonage. Now, what do you think of that?"

The burden was gone. Throwing her arms around my neck, she wept great tears of relief. Perhaps I did too. At any rate, I could not talk straight for a few minutes.

I resigned the care of my Doodle Town charge at once, and hired two wagons to move my family and household chattels to the railroad depot. My furniture consisted, in part, of an old bedstead, a three-legged table, some bookshelves, several chairs, a few stools, and a number of kitchen utensils, such as tin pans, kettles, and pots. The whole lot was worth about \$15, and actually sold for \$11.35 when I reached the station. I was glad to get rid of them, since they did not comport with a city pastorate. My wife, two daughters, and myself occupied a wagon, while Wax followed on Bucephalus, whistling "Yankee Doodle." Of course, we took the trusty mule to our new home, and gave him, now tottering with age, all the attention due a veteran of his age and importance. He was, indeed, a member of the family, wearing constantly a band of red ribbon around his neck, and eating as often as we ate.

The first Sabbath of a new pastorate is always a season of more or less anxiety and nervousness to a minister. As he enters his pulpit, he beholds a sea of faces strange to him. Many persons express profound sympathy and readiness to love him upon better acquaintance, while others gaze upon him with stoic indifference. Some seem to question his ability to fill the place, and others appear to be mentally engaged

in remorseless criticisms. Some are concerned about the shape of his cravat, others are absorbed in the consideration of his clothes. After the sermon, as he steps forth upon the street, he hears such whispered interrogations as, "How do you like him?" and "Do you think he'll suit?" I must confess, such a prospect did not put me in the best trim for public speaking, especially as I was unaccustomed to city ways and to so grand a church. But I determined to do the very best I could.

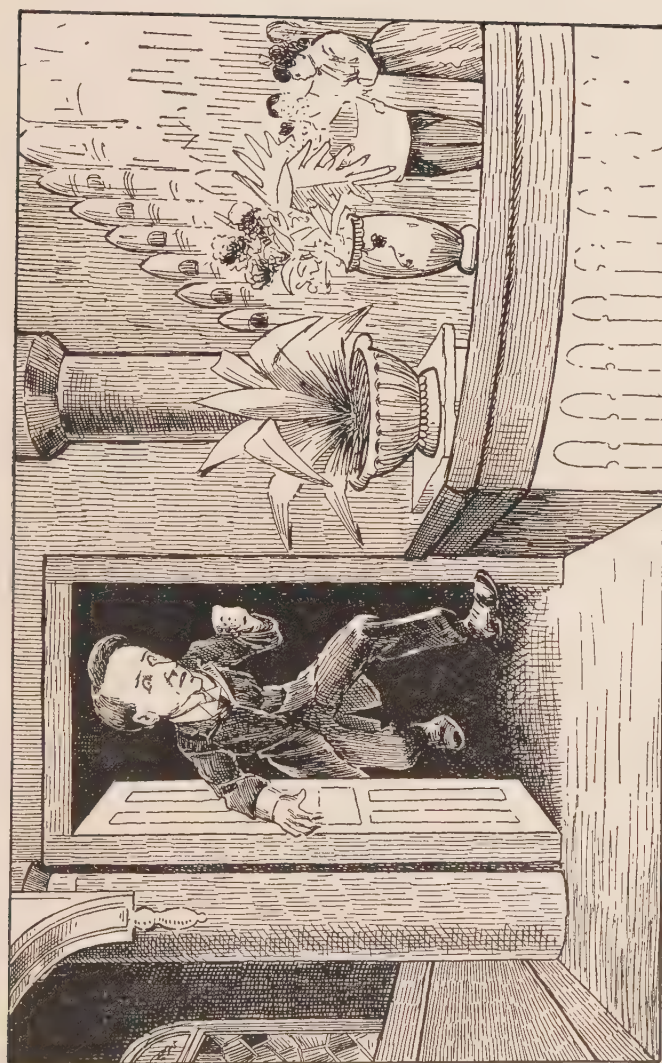
On Saturday evening I was duly instructed that the pastor must enter the pulpit from a small dungeon (called the pastor's study to make it respectable) just as the organ should strike up. Having had it so forcibly impressed upon my mind that not to turn up at precisely the right moment would affect the whole sermon, and have a tendency to break down my congregation, I ordered breakfast to be served half an hour earlier than usual, and by the help of a street-car arrived at Toplofty Church two hours before there could be any possibility of the organ's getting ahead of me. I didn't intend to give it a chance in a thousand to do so.

After more than an hour's patient waiting, I approached the study door with mouse-like stillness, and placed my ear to the keyhole to see if I could hear any tidings from the choir, but no sound greeted me in the unbroken silence of the great edifice. I began to think that the hour for service had passed, that the organ had sounded, and that, as I failed to come to time, the congregation had dispersed; so once or twice I stealthily opened the study door and peeped slyly

into the auditory, to find how matters stood. Dropping again into my chair, I fell asleep from nervous exhaustion, and dreamed of Doodle Town, longing to be there once more, and longing to be back home.

While I was dozing, the organ's peal, like a deafening note of thunder, broke upon my startled ear. Under the impulse of the moment, I ran obliviously into the pulpit, and gave out the 3000th hymn. It took just a quarter of an hour for the organ to end its march from "Norma," and I was compelled to wait, under most distressing embarrassment, to get my hymn through.

Toplofty Church hired the chief performers in its choir at large salaries, disregarding spiritual qualifications altogether; consequently, the choir committee, who should have spent a year or two longer at the mourners' bench, or in Sing Sing, having made the acquaintance of all the orchestras and minstrel troupes in the city, selected from them just such a set of players and singers as they thought would attract the biggest rabble. This delectable tribe played and sang songs of doubtful propriety on the stage until eleven o'clock Saturday night, and "Coronation" on Sunday morning. They amused the Bacchanalian hosts of sin six days, and guided the worshipers of Jehovah one. Their singing commanded so much money, and it was a matter of supreme indifference to them what the Lord thought of it, since it was intended to draw a congregation, and had no reference to the Almighty. It was immaterial to them whether they tuned up on "Home, Sweet Home," "Yankee Doodle," or the long meter Doxology.



"I RAN OBLIVIOUSLY INTO THE PULPIT, AND GAVE OUT THE 3,000TH HYMN."

Besides the professionals, there were about two dozen half-fledged boys and girls belonging to the congregation, aping their musical seniors with immaculate reverence. The choristers, being located in the gallery directly in front of the pulpit, presented an amusing spectacle. A dozen bloated, rum-scented fiddlers and stage-singers, surrounded by a lot of youths, conspicuous for their scarf-pins and carefully plastered-down hair, and a bevy of girls with rouged cheeks, bangs, and bustles, all gasping:

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!”

Grand old hymn! A hundred times has the weary pilgrim been strengthened by it. But who would have recognized it as thus it came from the choir?

“Ha fa ah fwa dah sha, ya sah ad thah Lor-aw,
Ah la fwa yah fwa-ah ong whang ohx sa la wha-ah!”

At length the orchestra consented to attend to my hymn for me, and as the organ pealed solemnly forth, the whole congregation turned as one man, and with necks twisted in rapt devotion, set their gaze upon the gallery, not uttering a single word themselves—and worshiped the instruments and voices.

After service, the leader of the choir met me in the study, stating that he wished to play, at a funeral I had announced for four o'clock, a superb march that had created a sensation in the West, and which would be introduced on the following Friday night at the Motley Opera House. He said he was especially anxious to do this, as the deceased was a gentleman of wealth and influence, and would draw a crowded

house. I informed the chorister that I did not advertise theaters, and furthermore, that as the deceased had failed to march to gospel time when living, I didn't think it would improve him much to march to theater time when dead.

The hour for night service having arrived, the choir repeated the gyrations of the morning, with some additions. They applied the tuning fork with greater precision, made more faces, squealed louder, stretched their mouths wider, threw their heads back farther, rolled the whites of their eyes with greater art, and, instead of a selection from "Norma," introduced the worship by rattling off a jig from—Norma's daughter, I presume.

After the sermon I requested the choir to meet me in the study.

"My musical friends," said I, in mellowed accents, "to date you have been hired to do just what you have done with such marvelous fidelity. I wish to say now, however, that as pastor of Toplofty Church, and director of its prayer meeting, of its Sunday school, and of its choir, I propose to change the object of worship, substituting God instead of the organ. And inasmuch as Jehovah, of whom perhaps you have heard, seeketh only such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, we shall not need a Sunday concert any longer. You may, therefore, consider yourselves honorably discharged. Good night!"

During the week I sought to inaugurate several minor reforms, such as kindness to mules and protection for men and boys in street-cars crowded with women. Amidst lengthening shadows, as I home-

ward turned my weary steps one evening, pondering what reforms I next should attempt, a nondescript-looking man hailed me, and introduced himself as the special reporter of the "Goalong Daily Blowgun."

"I wish your attention a moment," said he.

"Very well; make known your errand."

"It is our custom to wait upon the different clergymen to ascertain their subjects for Sunday announcement, and we should be pleased to have yours."

"Sir," said I, "I fear the tendency of your Sunday announcements is to emphasize curious texts and pander to the lower tastes of men. If a minister wants to draw a crowd by displaying his wit and blasphemy, he should turn clown and join a show."

"There is justness in your remarks, sir," at length he said, in an undertone, "and it would perhaps be well if a sentiment could be aroused on the subject. Ministers might make known their subjects without pandering to the vicious clamor for sensationalism."

"Very true," said I. "Let me see the character of the themes for Sunday."

He handed me the list. The following was the morning bill of fare proposed by the most ambitious candidates for popular patronage: "Silver Harps," "The Ship of Science Capsized," "A Celestial Love-scrape," "A Dialogue between Departed Spirits," "A Ghost at Sea," "How to Vote," "A Cherub's Wing," "An Angel's Tale," "A Leap in the Dark."

"These are excellent themes," said I, "prayerfully chosen, reverently worded, and no doubt likely to do great good and convert many sinners. Please put me down for 'The Blind Stagers.'"

For evening service there was: "A Carnival of Worms over a Dead King," "A Fleeing Prophet Buried Alive," "An Apostate Suicide," "Dead Flies," "Defunct Frogs," "A Frozen Dog," "Drowned Pigs," "A Lifeless Lion," "A Dynamited Dragon," "A Perished Elephant," "A Wayless Whale."

"This is a graceful climax," said I. "From a worm to a whale—and it is calculated to draw the floating populace in the ratio of the subjects as arranged. It seems that all the night themes are dignified and impressive—relating in some way to death. In this the clergymen have evinced eminent piety and wisdom; for they know if buzzards are to be attracted to the sanctuary, the pulpit must savor of carrion. Mr. Reporter, you may chalk me down thus: 'The Funeral of an Ass (Jeremiah 22: 19). Relatives and friends of the deceased invited.'"

The reporter bade me good-by, and, smiling, said he'd be at Toplofty on Sunday or "burst a boiler," whatever that meant. And on Sunday I got all the fools in town—and that means a big congregation.

It was then that Sheepskin College, true to its propensities, nicknamed me "Doctor." Henceforth, everytime I get an invitation to a watermelon festival, or a soup-bone from a butcher, my name is written "the Rev. H. Beans, D.D.," or "the Rev. Dr. Beans." This change in my name necessitated a number of other changes. My coat ever afterwards was made in clerical style, two inches and a half longer in the tail than common, while I purchased a pair of eye-glasses to give me the true divinity stare.

THE AVERAGE GIRL

Chapter XXVIII.

As pastor of a large and influential church, my services as a lecturer frequently were called into requisition outside the boundaries of my fold. One of my lectures made a great sensation, and I feel that this book would not be complete without it. Therefore it is printed herein. It was called "The Average Girl," and was delivered at the commencement of a very popular and widely-known female college in the city of Goalong, a college that to you, reader, I shall call the Institute for the Prevention of Utility. While this was not its name, it more thoroughly describes it than its real title. The young ladies who listened to the lecture were unable to say whether I was giving them some good advice in the shape of a humorous address or whether I was trying to make them the objects of my derision. They looked at it from different points of view and formed two factions—Beans and anti-Beans. To one side I was a great teacher striving to make my teachings interesting through the medium of fun, while to the other I simply was a most execrated individual indeed. I leave it to the reader to judge of the situation for himself or herself.

"Young ladies," said I, when I addressed them, "the proper study of mankind is woman; the only study of

womankind is man. I think it was the grandfather of Diogenes who made the sage remark that girls are a necessary evil, but if Diogenes didn't have a grandfather, or didn't make the statement, I take the responsibility upon myself. Of course, I do not allude to that girlhood which blesses the world with sunny smiles, which stimulates the sterner sex to industry and valor as by an inspiration, and which nobly offers upon the home altar the incense of a pure and unselfish life. No! such womanhood is a necessary benison. It is at once the preserving bond of society and the fairest blossom of the race. It is of a very different girl that I speak—the average girl.

"The average girl spends three winters at a boarding-school, amusing herself an hour a day with French, German, and Italian. She promptly purchases the catalogue series of mathematical books to adorn her mantelpiece, which, with vestal fidelity, she guards against the profanation of a touch. She scrupulously writes her name in a 'Three Weeks' Course in Philosophy,' or chemistry, geology, botany, physiology, or astronomy, and masters them up to the title-pages. She buys a universal history, which she covers in bright calico, with exquisite taste, and puts in the bottom of her trunk. She takes drawing and painting lessons for six months, and, counting the time spent at home, she practices on her piano or her guitar three times a week for ten years. Between sunset and tea, she sits in an upstairs window with her chum and discourses of balls and beaux. Between tea and ten o'clock she writes fifteen to twenty letters, 'real nice letters,' containing one idea to every three epistles.

"At the end of the third session she graduates with honor in all the books in her trunk, and on Commencement Day reaps a harvest of diplomas. Clad in white, adorned with medals, and bordered with ribbons, she reads an essay on 'The True Woman,' or 'The Advantage of an Education.' Notwithstanding she knows nothing of either, or of anything save foolishness, she'll win a creditable amount of applause, and captivate the heart of every gosling in the audience. Young ladies, you will please pardon me if I should intimate that I know whereof I affirm, and myself have felt her wondrous charms.

"After she lays aside, for the balance of her earthly residence, her 'arduous studies,' the average girl returns home, a lady of leisure and accomplishments, to enjoy perpetual vacation, except when acting as general supervisor of her parents. If the market-man asks her to ascertain the cost of three dozen eggs at twelve and a half cents per dozen, she rushes frantically to her slate, and, having covered both sides with figures, triumphantly announces that if she had not made a small mistake in the beginning she would have gotten it exactly—but she reckons he had better wait till papa comes.

"In astronomy, she has no profound knowledge of any of the heavenly bodies but the moon, and that is because there is a man in it. In science, she does not know the difference between an atom and a molecule, an earthquake and a hurricane, an isthmus and a strait. While unable to distinguish a rhinoceros from a crocodile, she can, however, expertly discriminate between a peacock's feather and an ostrich plume.

"In history, she has heard of Columbus, but doesn't know whether he was a Frenchman, an Italian, or a Dutchman. She thinks the Thirty Years' War lasted eighteen months, that the Sepoy Mutiny is identical with the Mexican War, and that the French Revolution took place in Canada. If you ask her when the War of 1812 occurred, she replies that she is 'not good on dates;' if you ask her what nations fought it, she remarks that she is 'not good on names;' if you ask her where the war was waged, she claims that she 'never could remember places.' She believes that Lafayette was a Seminole chief, and that John Adams was the father of the express business, while George III was vice-president under Washington's administration.

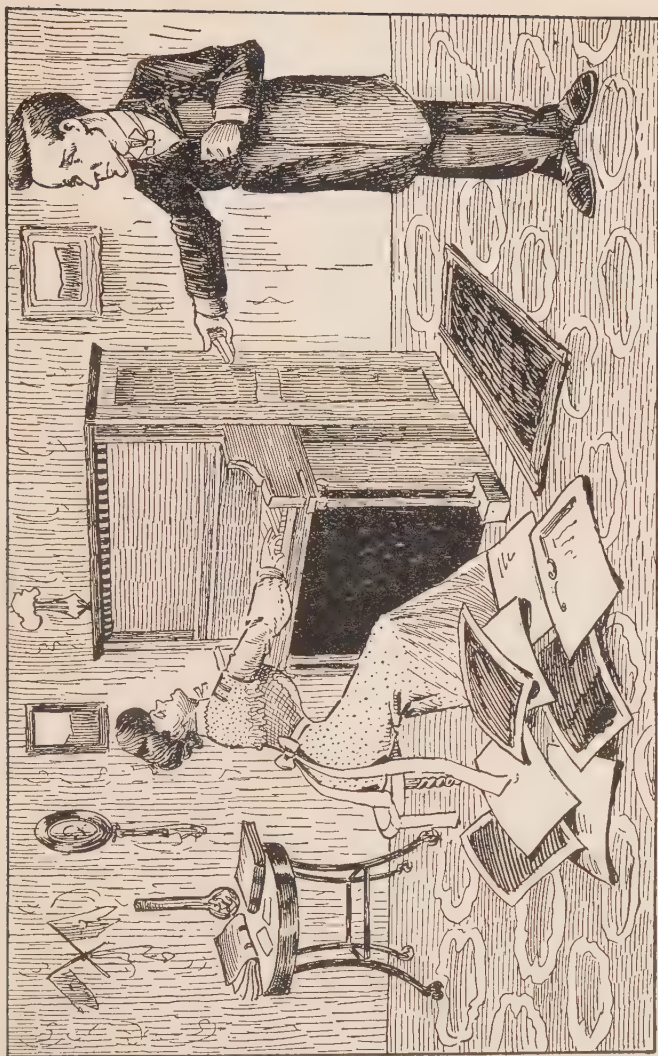
"In language, she can say with superb fluency *bon ton, beaux, soirée, musicale, chapeau*, and *a la mode*, but she cannot direct a wayfarer to the next cross-roads nor write a receipt in any language under the sun. Turning up her nose at grammar and rhetoric, she can give expression, with perfect ease and unimpeachable emphasis, to every conception of her brain or emotion of her heart simply by using the list of interjections. She can creditably perform her part in conversation for two hours by the use of the exclamations, 'Ah!' 'Oh!' 'Indeed!' 'You don't say!' 'Impossible!' 'Why, Mr. Blank!' 'Now, Mr. Blank!' 'How cruel!' 'Too absurd!' 'How ridiculous!' 'Oh, me!' 'You ought to be ashamed!' 'Awful!' 'Horrors!' 'There now!' 'Ha, ha, ha!'

"Having studied music for ten years, of course she has piled up her stand with a multitude of choice

operas, songs, and marches; but when asked to play, she is always out of practice; if requested to sing, she is hoarse, in proof whereof she clears her throat. After she has been begged, implored, and besought for an hour and a half, however, she flies savagely to the piano and drums off a feeble little polka that would fail to arrest the attention of a kitten. She plays one air and puts on ten thousand.

"The average girl conceals the handsomest part of her face with hair, leaving a small aperture for her eyes, bends herself double, and girds herself with a bustle to show that one may be an ape without accepting the theory of evolution. (This was during the days when the horrible contortion known as 'the Grecian bend,' and the barbarous scheme of hair-dressing called 'bangs' were fashionable, but the same general truth is applicable to-day, for there are feminine fads now quite as foolish and disfiguring.) She wears shoes with the heels in the middle of her instep, dons a hat surmounted by a murdered bird, and marches furiously down town to attend the milliner's. She reads novels nearly all day, which she says are 'just splendid,' eats pickles and sweets indiscriminately in the afternoon, and receives beaux in the evening. She dances till daybreak one night in the week, wears dresses too brief at both ends, and refuses to be civilized.

"In summer, the average girl joins the Idiot Club, and takes a train for a summer resort. She arrives at the station, where she is to purchase her ticket, with a whoop, a shout, and a scream that alarm sober people. When inquiry is instituted as to this uproar-



"SHE PLAYS ONE AIR AND PUTS ON TEN THOUSAND."

iousness the discovery is made that it is an instance of an effect without a cause. With a couple of companions, she rushes upon the car steps before the train stops, drops her gloves, and loses her hat. Having recovered the articles, she sinks upon the first vacant seat she sees, in a laughing swoon, attracting the unwilling attention and disturbing the peace of everybody on board. Every ten minutes she raises and lowers a window or two, dashes to the water-cooler occasionally, and now and then changes her seat; all of which evolutions are continued amid yells and fits of laughter, for a distance of a hundred or two hundred miles, when, exhausted from excess of joy, she poises her head gracefully on the back of the seat, arousing herself to consciousness only as she beholds the conductor passing, which unfortunate wretch she never fails to ply with a string of interrogations. Having arrived at her destination, she laughs, shrieks, dances, and flirts for three delirious weeks, when she returns home to complain of the monotony of life, which she thinks is 'awful dull.'

"The average girl finds no pleasure in home, because she never has prepared herself for the practical duties of life. Of those things that afford abiding joy, she knows nothing. She is like an imprisoned bird that batters its wings against the wires that confine it. The dignity of existence she never has considered, except when writing an essay; the grandeur of a useful life she never has stopped, in the whirl of dissipation, to ponder. She cannot scramble eggs, stuff a chicken (except subjectively), boil a dumpling, fry a potato, or salt the dough for an ashcake. She cannot

make a fire, hem a handkerchief, sweep a door-mat, dust a wall-pocket, or rinse a dish-rag. She ekes out a semi-sentimental, semi-hysterical, wholly useless life, unfit for the duties of earth, and unprepared for the blissful activities of heaven.

"The average girl, of course, joins the church. This she does because it is altogether respectable, approved by the highest circles of fashion, and opens a door to the privileges of church fairs and festivals. Besides, it gives her an opportunity to display from Sunday to Sunday her last dress, or hat, to show her gilt-edged hymnbook, and to see those of others of her set. She never has halted long enough in the thoughtless race she makes of life to learn what Christianity requires, or what the church is for. She bows punctiliously during public prayer—and arranges her hat. She accomplishes what the wisest men pronounce impossible—does two things at a time—when she sings alto to the Lord and snickers at the girl in front of her. She reads a short Psalm at night, if she has attended a funeral during the day.

"It is unnecessary to say that the average girl gets married—certainly she does. And worse luck it is that often she weds before her better sister—the extraordinary girl—gets a husband. She opines that unmingled joy awaits her, and that hymeneal felicity will last forever; two years later she leaves off the 'o' and simply pines. At about thirty years of age, she begins to see through a glass darkly, and to realize the existence of a sure-enough, tangible, practical world. When forty, she sees men as trees walking, and has the exalted honor of supporting a husband—a real, live

husband. Like a true wife, she takes excellent care of her consort, paying his champagne bills, and defraying his expenses to the circus. While he is at the club of nights, she knits him comfortable socks; and while he sits on a box in front of a drug-store in the day, she gives music lessons, or runs a millinery. When about fifty, she is put in a section of the graveyard, tired of the world, tired of life, and tired of her husband.

“Permit me to say in conclusion, young ladies of the Institute, that I trust you are in advance of the average girl, who never can be esteemed a success; and that, with Cupid’s golden arrow, you will slay every one your man, live in a palace, and devote your energies to the amelioration of the miseries of the human kind.”

As I closed my lecture, the girls rose, and tossing their indignant heads, sang:

“We bonnie maids say,
As at vespers we pray,
We’ll do the best we can;
Give patience to wait,
Till some subsequent date,
World without men. A man!”

I need only say that, since the delivery of the foregoing oration, my services have not been demanded by any more female colleges, and that my funny speeches are now solicited chiefly for temperance lodges and Christmas trees.

But, dear reader, I ask you: was I not right in my talk to the young ladies of the Institute for the Prevention of Utility? Is not the average girl just ex-

actly what I painted her? Do you think if a man came along with a kodak and snapshotted this estimable female, inwardly as well as outwardly, he would be able to give the world any better photograph of her than I did? Isn't she a useless, purposeless, aimless, hysterical, and altogether foolish sort of a person?

Of course, dear reader, if you are a girl I don't class you with her. I give you a chance for a little self-examination. If you happen to look anything like the young lady I described in my lecture, swear off at once and devote your life to being the un-average girl, which means that a share of that devotion should go toward making some fellow's life and home happy and contentful, instead of wretched and miserable.

A SATURDAY'S DIARY

Chapter XXIX.

FEW people have any adequate idea of the constant and varied demands made upon a minister's time, salary, patience, heart, and brain. He spends a large part of each day trying to do a whole host of things required of him. The following is a sample diary for Saturday, the one day in the week perhaps that a pastor would like to spend in rest, quiet, and meditation for the morrow:

Six o'clock A.M.—Awaked by a tremendous thumping at the front door. The servant brings me word that a lightningrod man wants to see me immediately. I make answer that I have just returned from a long journey, and am tired, sick, and sleepy, and ask to be excused. Agent sends reply that the church is in imminent danger, and should have a rod on it before breakfast. Seven churches and thirteen temperance lodges have been struck, he says, throughout the world during the last twenty-four hours. Says he is a disinterested party, but a wellwisher to the cause. Doesn't like to see churches destroyed when they can be so easily saved. Says he's going to come to hear me preach to-morrow. Sends a notice for me to read from the pulpit, and wants me to indorse it in a speech.

Says his mother is a member of my denomination. Declares that lightning will not strike within two miles of one of his rods. I reply that I want him to fit up a rod for each of my legs, as I am constantly exposed to storms; and that, in view of his religious tendencies, I charge only \$5 for reading the notice, and \$10 for the speech, in advance. Doesn't accept my offer.

6:35 *A.M.*—A tramp rouses me up at the back window for the purpose of borrowing forty-five cents to pay his fare to the next town. I lean out of bed, peep through the blinds, and tell him that it would pain me to see such a man leave the city, and that I could not be instrumental in depriving the community of a citizen like him. But if he will accept the appointment, he may consider himself royal sawyer to the parsonage, and by dressing a half cord of wood, become heir to a salary of forty-five cents. He declines the office.

7:15 *A.M.*—Had just fallen asleep. Mrs. Dreamly awakes me by sending up a poem entitled the "Silver Moon," on which she says she has been engaged for two years. Wants to publish it in a magazine, and desires to know what it is worth. I advise her not to publish at less than a thousand dollars a line, and if she can't get that to hold it. We don't see such poetry every day. Better not dispose of the poem at any price; hand it down to posterity to show what a woman can do when she quits making biscuits.

8 *A.M.*—Get up and look in the glass; don't look well—I mean the glass. Go to breakfast, find the servant has left, and Polytechnic doing the cooking. Find she also must make fires, go to market, sweep up

generally, set the table, wash the dishes, and bring in wood for the kitchen. I know she's the best wife in the world. Won't let me help her—says D.D. and drudgery don't go together. Sump'n in that.

9 A.M.—Just entering my study. A youth, who had been dismissed from his Sunday school class for habitual neglect of his lesson, comes up behind me suddenly, gasping in great excitement, "Doctor, I am appointed to lead the young people's meeting to-morrow evening, and I want to talk on the subject, 'Who Was Cain's Wife?' Can you give me any light on it?" "Oh, yes; you might venture to say that Cain was her husband, and also that she was the conjoint daughter of her father and mother on both sides. You might add, without fear of successful contradiction, the historic statement that she dwelt in the land of Nod." He departs happy.

9:15 A.M.—Go to work, realizing I have to prepare two sermons for Sunday, and have not a text for either. Scratch my head and try to think of something to preach about.

9:50 A.M.—Just about to settle down upon a text, when my entire train of thought is ditched by a decrepit old bachelor who wants to marry a widow, and asks me to help him. I tell him that I never married a widow, and don't understand the business.

10 A.M.—A gaily-decorated young woman announces herself as on "a vital mission." Unrolls a bundle of recipes, that apparently have been handled a decade or two. Gotten up for ministers—add fifteen years to their lives—copied in her own hand—price only twenty-five cents each. Hands me one for

dyspepsia which has cured a thousand ministers. I assure her that I have not a symptom of dyspepsia, and can digest grindstones fried in rubber. Then, wouldn't I like a remedy for minister's sore throat? I ask if she knew what caused this disease. Says she supposes it is brought on by excessive talking. Then won't she excuse me now before I contract the malady? Doesn't take the hint. Thrusts at me successively recipes for nervous prostration, insomnia, antifat, hydrophobia, and finally with some caution, a remedy for melancholia and insanity. Perhaps I do need something along that line. I roll my eyes, toss my arms aimlessly, throw my head back and laugh, kick over the rocking chair, jump upon the table, repeat with wild gesticulations "The Maniac" scream "I am not mad, I am not mad!" Thinks I am, and flees.

10:45 A.M.—Forgot what text I had selected—start afresh. The morning is passing rapidly. I am getting nervous. Think I'll have to preach about recognition in heaven. That's easy. No, I preached about that the last time I got in a pinch. All is dark.

11:15 A.M.—Several quick raps upon my study door. "Come in!" A slim man with a faint moustache enters. "I am horrified, sir," say I, "that you should thus rudely break in upon my meditations. But I grant you five minutes in which to state your case." Says he is a singing-master and wants me to get him a class. Says he is the best singer in the United States, and can teach a duck to make excellent music in three weeks. Jerks a book from his satchel, seizes me by the neck unawares, and has a tuning-fork buzzing in my ear before I can speak. The idea of teaching me

to sing! I never turned a tune in my life. I finally tell the slim man, whose squeaking voice reminds me of a creaking door, that he'd make an excellent precentor for a class of mosquitoes.

12 M.—No text yet, and my brain is throbbing. No preaching to-morrow at two large churches. A crowd of strangers will fill up my pews and expect big things. Wonder where they will get 'em. It's court week, too, and the judge and lawyers will be out, perhaps. I think I can give some good instruction to lawyers without much reflection. Yes, I've got one of my sermons now. The text is Hebrews xiii. 14—"Here have we no continuing city." It will be considered under two heads—viz.: 1. Lying; 2. Honesty. The first division is for the lawyers; the second, for their clients. This classification embraces nearly all the citizens of the United States. I may have to do some tall twisting to make the divisions fit the text—but I can do it.

12:30 P.M.—Exhausted by the exercises of the morning, I lay me down to get a nap, that I may recruit my energies preparatory to another tussle with a text later in the afternoon. Fall asleep—am rudely roused by an awkward elephant of a boy rushing into my room and throwing his arms around me, exclaiming, "I'm so glad to see you, Uncle Red!" "Who are you, sir?" asked I, "that you dare thus impertinently plunge into my private apartment and rob me of the small modicum of rest I seek to obtain from the molestation of strangers? Who are you, sir?" "Why, Uncle Red, I thought you knew me," he returns, "I'm your wife's cousin's sister's uncle's nephew's brother's niece's son by step-marriage. Come to spend a week



“ ‘I’M YOUR WIFE’S COUSIN’S SISTER’S UNCLE’S NEPHEW’S BROTHER’S NIECE’S SON BY
STEP-MARRIAGE. COME TO SPEND A WEEK.’ ”

with my relatives." "Sir," say I, rubbing my half-closed eyes, "you will find that the Sawdust Hotel has been built for just the class of relatives to which you belong. Good day, sir!" The visitor of distant kin retired.

1 P.M.—Dinner time. More time than dinner. No servant yet. A large family of country members, who have come to town to trade, have just stopped in, without giving warning, to dine with us. Polytechnic is ready to cry. Our guests devour like a swarm of locusts everything before them. Had my eye on one little ear of corn I had hoped to fall heir to—but alas! it's gone. A wild-looking boy grabbed it. I'm awfully hungry. Go to the hen's nest for an egg. The old speckle is on. I wait for her to lay. Doesn't lay; I believe she's sitting! If she is, I'll starve. Wait another half hour—no egg. I go to the garden, pluck a squash, peel it, put a little salt and pepper on it, and eat it raw—think that sometime in the past I have had a better dinner. I go next to a tree and get a green persimmon. I eat the persimmon to draw up my stomach to fit my meal. Economical arrangement. Every preacher should have a persimmon tree.

2:30 P.M.—Wish I didn't have to preach to-morrow night. The country members have just left. I shut myself up in my study to get a skeleton for my other sermon. Let's see! I think I'll preach on "The Brevity of Time." No; I made a prayer-meeting talk on that last Thursday evening. I hear a knock at the door. I must be a mighty good man not to get mad at such repeated interruptions. But I do get mad—that's the trouble. Miss Celestia Stump enters, weep-

ing. I always sympathize with the afflicted. "Be resigned, Miss Stump, afflictions await us all, and time at length will soothe the deepest grief." "No! never! Dr. Beans," says the sobbing maid, pressing her handkerchief to her eyes. "My grief is inconsolable." "When did your father leave for the better land? I heard he was sick." "Oh! it's not pa, Doctor," replies Miss Celestia, indulging in increased lamentations. "It's dear, sweet, precious, lovely, darling little Snowdrop, my pet poodle, you know; and I have come to ask you to write a suitable obituary in verse to be read at the funeral this evening at six o'clock. Pa says he knows you will be glad to do it, for you thought so much of sainted Snowdrop—precious thing." "Miss Stump," say I, hoarsely, recovering from a variety of emotions, "please say to your sagacious parent, that the obituary will cost twenty-five cents a verse retail; or if he wants it by the wholesale, I'll furnish a couple of miles for fifteen dollars, in advance." I think they will bury the pup without obital notice.

3:15 P.M.—Again I try to collect my thoughts and settle upon a text. I place my hand on my aching brow, and think as concentratedly as I can. A sewing-machine agent enters without knocking. Puts a machine down, and says it will run forever, and make less noise the longer it is run; says it will sew any sort of material in the world, and starts it to rattling furiously. "Please go down," say I, "into the kitchen, and sew together my waffle-irons that got broken last week." Sees that I mean business and leaves.

4 P.M.—My head aches severely. Don't think my squash-persimmon dinner agreed with me. Unless I

can be perfectly quiet the rest of the evening, I cannot prepare a sermon. Let's see! I want something practical for my people—something that will make saints rejoice and sinners tremble. I think I'll try that passage in Paul's letter to Timothy where he says—Bothers! (I don't mean Paul said that, but myself—) I hear a frantic rapping at my door again! Miss Masculina Mugg introduces herself. Asks if I am not a friend of her suffering and downtrodden sex, and if I don't want to immortalize myself by espousing a noble cause and breaking the debasing chains that are rusting on woman's snowy wrists.

I tell her that, after my own, there is no sex under the starry canopy of the azure heavens, north, east, south, or west, in air, earth, or water, that I esteem more than her own; but that I do not care just now to espouse the sex, as I already have espoused the best specimen belonging to it. Yet if I should lose her, I suppose I would espouse again, and her application would be considered. She pretends not to understand me, and asks if she can have the use of my church Sunday evening, to deliver a lecture on "Woman's Rights." I tell her I think women have all of their own rights and half of the men's, and that she would do well to reflect prayerfully on Paul's advice to women—"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan." She goes off speaking parables. Think she'll take the apostle's advice if she gets an offer.

4:30 P.M.—A lady sends for me on important busi-

ness. Wants me to coax Johnnie to let the doctor pull an aching tooth. I go—and pull the tooth myself. John yells a symphony in B minor, while I laugh. Feel a little better for a while.

6 P.M.—I again enter my study, tired and nervous. I lock the door to secure privacy. I scarcely turn the key before I hear a fist thundering at the door. I make no reply. Polytechnic comes out and says I'm busy and can't see company. Says he has business with me that I can't afford to neglect. She turns the knob, but can't get in. The man tells her he reckons I'm preparing to commit suicide; he heard of just such a case day before yesterday. My spouse grows anxious. The man gets an ax from the back yard and is about to batter the door down. I let him in. Before I have time to deliver the complimentary remarks I had prepared, he holds an opened prospectus within two inches of my nose, narrating fluently the wonders of a book entitled "An Encyclopedia of Remarkable Mysteries." Price, in library style, \$6.50.

While he is displaying the merits of his book, another agent drops in and calls me into the passage. Says he wants to see me privately. Tells me the first agent is a fraud; that his book is nothing but a hash made up of other works, hastily gotten together, and full of inaccuracies. The publishers tried three weeks to get him to take hold of it, but he was too honest a man to palm off such a swindle on the unsuspecting public. When he sells a man anything he wants him to get the worth of his money. Says he: "Moved by such considerations, I have been induced to handle a work called 'The Universal Booktionary of Storms.'

It ought to be in the hands of every gentleman—sells at sight.” “Won’t sell me,” I opine, and say so flat-footedly.

Just here enters a third agent, who steps up to me cautiously, and throwing his arm affectionately around my neck, confidingly whispers to me that I had better be on the lookout, since these two rascals are in league, one trying to sell where the other fails. Says he had been following them up for three months at his own expense, and thoroughly understands their game. Says he is an honest man himself, and delights to expose humbuggery, just from principle. He can’t bear to see people imposed upon, especially ministers of the gospel. He knows they have a hard time and are doing a blessed work. He was impressed himself with a call to preach when he was a lad. While his object is to expose fraud and protect the people, he carries along the most magnificent book of the age, “The Diseases of Dogs,” (I asked him if he has had the disease) which is particularly suited to the needs of pastors, for whose benefit he has consented to sell it. Doesn’t care to make anything on it—his reward is a good conscience. Says it is an illustrated book, and sells readily for \$10; but as his aim is not to make money, but to do good, he will partly give it to me and charge only \$7.25, to cover cost. Says he will be at church to-morrow morning during Sunday school, and will make a talk if I wanted him to. My supper-bell is ringing. I ask my visitors to adjourn and take chairs on the porch until I issue my work on “Cheek.”

7 P.M.—Supper. Salt, pepper, crackers, and water. I eat heartily. No servant yet.

8 P.M.—Retire again to my study to make a last effort for a text. In desperation I clasp my hands behind my back, bend my body forward, walk the floor, and sigh. I have genuine sympathy for myself. I fancy an enormous congregation waiting to hear the message of life—but alas! I have no message, and I picture myself rising before said congregation without even a text. Well, maybe I can get a sermon before bed-time. Let's see! The mark that was put upon Cain—how'll that do?— Thump, thump at my door. A patent-medicine man comes in and spreads small boxes on mantelpiece, table, bookcase, chairs, and floor.

"These are Electric Pills," chants the man. "They are made wholly of vegetable matter, found only on a small uninhabited island in the open Polar Sea. I was wrecked some years ago, and was borne by an iceberg, upon which I managed to climb, to this favored isle, where, almost famished, I chanced to find this life-giving herb, of which I chewed a couple of leaves, and gained six pounds in two minutes. I soon gained such wonderful strength, that, having filled my pockets with this powerful curative, I was enabled to swim to one of our northern ports. I now place within the reach of all a certain, speedy, and permanent cure. It regulates the liver, purifies the blood, invigorates the kidneys to healthy action, and tones up the system generally. It is good for sprains, burns, blisters, styes, neuralgia, insomnia, pain in the back, chills and fevers, corns, loss of life—er—ahem—sight, hearing, or speech, low spirits, baldness, warts, itch, and all diseases of the skin, blood, bones, and flesh.

The pills are entirely harmless, sir, purely vegetable, and can be taken in any quantity without danger. Will you have a box, sir? Only twenty-five cents. Splendid for clergymen!"

"Have a box of such pills?" gasp I. "Don't speak so modestly, sir; please leave me at least a carload." As I gaze through the window, I see the dispenser of pills plodding his way through the deepening shadows to the Sawdust Hotel.

8:45 P.M.—Surely I'll be quiet now for an hour or two. No one will dare to molest me at this hour of the night. What! Another knock at my door? "Who's there?" ask I, menacingly. No response; but another rap. "Who's there?" repeat I. A voice replies, "An agent of the Ne Plus Ultra Organ Company—best organ in the world. Want to show you illustrated catalogue—extra terms to ministers—double veneered case, three hundred and forty-nine stops." "Two stops are all I want to-night; please stop knocking, and go around the corner to the Sawdust Hotel and stop as much as you please."

8:50 P.M.—A bloated toper, whose wife has left him, comes to see if I will not try to induce her to return. Asks what I would do if "er great big woman, mad as er hornet, with flowin' red hair, her eyes flashin' fire, an' er ax handle in her hand, wus er comin' right at you." I reply that I'd run. The toper has suggested a sermon and after thanking him for his courtesy in coming, I promise to help adjust matters with his spouse. I'll talk to-morrow evening on "Collisions"—not family, but railroad disasters. A number of my young men are going on an excursion

Monday, and a little counsel will be timely. I sit down to write my sermon, part of which I quote:

Among the improvements of modern times, railroad collisions enjoy a conspicuous place. All civilized nations have them now. They mark the boundary line between progress and stagnation. Nothing stagnates where there is a collision. These splendid triumphs of modern enlightenment take place not only on a more magnificent scale than ever before, but they have greatly increased in popularity and usefulness. In former years very few people took part in them, but nowadays almost everybody is directly or indirectly interested in them. Some persons even go so far as to lavish considerable affection on them, reading the newspapers containing accounts of them with more assiduity and attention than the Bible.

While collisions have been of no special benefit to the participants, they nevertheless have proved of great advantage to a large number of other people. For instance, I knew a woman once, who lost a drunken husband by a collision, and she has been happy ever since. They have also thinned out dudes and put a timely end to a number of male women, thereby doing a very large amount of good.

It may be well just here to venture a bit of advice to persons who think of investing in this interesting class of accidents. So I begin by saying that collisions, like marriage, should not be lightly entered into, and, at first, one should invest cautiously. If you find that a collision is inevitable, choose daylight for it, since well-authenticated data, drawn from the records of undertakers, go to show that night seriously diminishes the attractions and the enjoyment. Unless the circumstances are peculiar, don't have more than one at a time. Two or more collisions at once are, in the main, unsatisfactory, and but few people can enjoy them. If you decide upon a collision before starting, don't start. But, should you determine upon a hazard, be sure to take out an accident insurance policy to the amount of two dollars and a half—a great deal more than the average man is worth.

As a rule, I would not get married in a collision, nor is it a good time to have a tooth pulled. I would not eat fried hog in such a crisis for if the collision doesn't kill you, the hog will. If you have a waxed mustache, and a pewter tooth-pick, don't fail to save the pick, even if you have to go under yourself. Always save the best.

If you should chance to be thrown down a precipice, be sure to hold your breath. I have never heard of a man's dying so long as he held his breath. If anybody else is with you, it is more comfortable to fall on top of the other fellow. As a general thing, it is better for him to get damaged than yourself. Unless there are some ameliorating circumstances, it is commonly prudent not to alight on your head. By violating this rule some have come to a premature demise. If necessary, fall on your back, so as not to be sick at your stomach.

Don't die in the descent, as your life might be thus shortened, and the prospect of recovery would be slight. If you die before you reach bottom, be resigned, and leave the funeral arrangements to somebody else—especially the expenses. If you have to die, let it be the last thing you do; and don't repeat it. If the accident proves fatal, keep shy of collisions in the future, since a man who suffers himself to undergo more than one fatal injury is not prudent. I never knew a man to recover from death by collision. If you are thrown into the air, stay up there till things get quiet below. I know no instance of anybody who heeded these precautions that did not come out all right.

Collisions are not favorable to infidelity, as many a man takes then his first lesson in praying. Prayers during a collision should be brief. The New Theology does not seem to flourish in the soil of a collision, nor does the Higher Criticism take deep root.

II P.M.—Pillows and dreams that Toplofty Church has raised the stipend of the Rev. Heredity Beans, D.D., to \$29,426.50 1-2 a minute and that it takes nine deacons to carry the collection plate.

11:10 P.M.—Awakened by a knock at my door. Dreams tumble into the cellar and I sit up with a start. It is Polytechnic. I tell her that she ought to be ashamed of herself to rouse me when she knows what a terrible day I have had. She says she cannot help it but Mrs. Slowboy is downstairs and insists upon seeing me. I go to the door and yell downstairs to ask Mrs. Slowboy what she wants. Says she has a notice for a meeting of the Dorcas Society she wants read at both services and is afraid I won't remember them if she does not call my especial attention to them. I answer her sweetly to the effect that indeed I will not forget her, and go back to bed. Will I get through the night without another interruption?

THE MANTLE OF ELIJAH

Chapter XXX.

I ALWAYS have believed that this world sadly needs repairing, and under that irresistible conviction which only the true reformer or the true prophet knows, I resolved to give myself to the hazardous task of reformation. Besides, what was the use of being pastor of Goalong's most influential church unless I did something to rouse the town to an appreciation of its deficiencies? Accordingly I made my will and a few preparatory plans and set out. The will simply left the children to Polytechnic and the plans will reveal themselves as this narrative proceeds.

My very first effort as a municipal reform crusader was to visit the parsonage of the First Pharisaic Church, on Tincup Alley, to confer with its pastor, the Rev. Dr. Tomlins. Tomlins was a little womanish sort of man, with a passion for writing irreligious books, under the guise of doctrinal works, and preaching heretical sermons. His veracity had suffered somewhat from dryrot, due to lack of exercise, and his flock insinuated that in a crisis he would not express the entire truth. While making pretense of considerable learning, he betrayed the profoundest ignorance of the Scriptures. He had no definite belief, taught no definite Bible doctrine, claimed that it made

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no difference what a man believes, and doubted all the fundamentals of evangelical religion.

"Tomlins," I said, as I walked into his study, "I'm a prophet, and I have come to proclaim that the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God—and thou art the man! Your preaching is doing more harm than avowed infidelity. Hear the words of a prophet. Don't you think you have lived long enough? Don't you think you made a mistake in not dying some years ago? See if you can't correct the mistake in the near future. Think of the advantages of dying! How many people would reap untold benefit! How many boys might be reclaimed! If your church doors were closed what an immense gain to the public, and what an improvement there would be in the observance of our Sabbaths! This is the only line of usefulness open to you, and the step is necessary to a reformation of the town. Pardon my enthusiasm, but I see the great need. Seize the occasion, Tomlins; it is the opportunity of a lifetime. Yours in hope, good-by."

But Tomlins was too much dazed to reply, so I stepped back to the street, fearing he would not have sufficient ballast to do the sensible thing. Why won't people do right?

The prophetic impulse waxed stronger and stronger, and my enthusiasm grew with the passing of each hour. I went down the street shouting, "The town must be reformed! Society must be redeemed! Pagan customs must be abolished! The images of Baal must be cast down! The high places of sin must be made low! Our women must be civilized!"

As I reiterated these solemn exclamations, some of

my most influential young men, by a preconcerted arrangement, caused all the fire alarms to be sounded, all the church bells to be rung, and all the factory whistles to be blown; while, not understanding the rumpus and therefore joining it, everything noisy in the city voluntarily added whatever sound it could make. The object of this demonstration was to attract the attention of the people, and to enlist their hitherto dormant energies in something besides business and pleasure.

To emphasize the importance of the movement, I began parading the streets with a banner on one side of which were emblazoned the Ten Commandments and on the other a cross, while a streamer of crape floated from my hat, and a girdle of white ribbon encircled my waist. No Jonah ever pronounced surer doom, and no Nineveh ever felt the thrill of greater astonishment. Three thousand children left the public schools, women gazed in awe out of windows, servants deserted the kitchens, nurses in consternation abandoned baby carriages, barbers forgot their lathered customers, judges and lawyers and jury forsook the courts, business was suspended, newsboys dropped their papers, merchants stood dumfounded in their doors, cars came to a stand, vehicles blocked the streets, dogs barked, curious throngs followed the banner with the strange device, and even reporters ceased their search for scandal to learn what I was doing.

I halted my motley array of reform in front of the "Daily Home News" building, and told it to make a doleful noise. It did so and the editor fled into the cellar. Now this same widely-circulated paper had



"I BÉGAN PARADING THE STREETS WITH A BANNER, ON ONE SIDE OF WHICH WERE EM-
BLAZONED THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, AND ON THE OTHER A CROSS."

characterized a previous reform movement in which I had participated as the dream of an enthusiast, and had intimated that I, the reformer, ought to be put into a reformatory. It seemed to be eminently proper to disabuse the quill-driver's mind of this sarcasm; so, after going to his office, I sent the office-boy into the depths to solicit his employer's presence. The editor appeared with flushed face, and in an irate tone demanded to know what I wanted.

"Mr. Editor," said I, as soon as silence could be secured. "Society must be saved! The town must be redeemed! Editors must be civilized! Newspapers must be cleansed! And therefore I want you to throw the influence of your paper in behalf of reform."

"I must run my paper in the interest of its patrons; and what suits them suits me," he returned, endeavoring to "make a bluff."

I told the crowd to yell again, and the editor trembled at the sound.

"You decline, then," I went on, "to issue a civilized paper?"

"I have to conduct my business on business principles. I must make money. I have a family, and it can't live on corn cobs."

Again I told the mob to yell, and the editor's knees began to quake.

"Then, Mr. Editor," I continued, "I must array the best class of our citizens against you. Boys, how many of you will cancel your subscriptions and withdraw your advertisements?"

"I! I! I! I!" responded voices to the number of about two hundred, and then my little army yelled some

more. The journalist, at this, decided he had made sufficient resistance.

"Er, I say, Mr. Beans, let me say a word," said he. "I'll do this: I'll give you a column of the paper, first page, in which to advocate your ideas and methods without any restriction or cost whatever. That's the best I can do at this time.

"Thank you!" said I, for this was quite satisfactory, and I moved off flushed with victory. The army scattered and did some further yelling. A few of the better class followed me home, pledging their hearty support, and forming a nucleus for the reformation. And so I set to work to take the editor at his word.

In the next issue of the "Home News," on the first page, there was a column headed, "REFORM DEPARTMENT, conducted by the Rev. Dr. H. Beans, who assumes all responsibility for matter found in this column." And this is what was found therein:

A CLEAN PAPER NEEDED.

This paper has been run in the interest of shams, frauds, lawlessness, vice, and drunkenness. The reader will find in this issue a dozen advertisements of saloons at which drunken revels are held nightly, where scenes may be witnessed that would disgrace a Hottentot or make a cannibal blush. It is hoped that as soon as the editor becomes civilized, he will give the city a clean paper. Let your subscription indicate what you think of the Reform Movement, which has undertaken the task of cleaning Goalong.

DR. TOMLINS' OPPORTUNITY.

Yesterday the Rev. Dr. Tomlins was, on sufficient grounds, requested to die at an early date. Dr. Tomlins' intentions are not yet known, but his fellow citizens hope he will think favorably of the matter, and not miss so excellent a chance of serving his generation. We all shall await the issue with great anxiety, and in the meantime, let every lover of progress and enlightenment encourage, by means of a postal card, the clergyman to act promptly and wisely. The pulpit must be reformed!

YESTERDAY'S PRIZE-FIGHT.

There was a prize-fight at the old circus grounds yesterday afternoon, witnessed by three thousand of our worst citizens. The scene was a reproduction of the Dark Ages, and exhibited the worst ethics of pagans. Its morals would have shocked a Comanche Indian; its brutality would have disgusted a Bengal tiger. Both of the participating cattle were badly bruised and one seriously injured, but it is feared that he will recover. A petition will be circulated to-day praying the Legislature to enact human laws concerning prize-fighting. All persons except barbarians will sign it. Public morals must be protected!

MASQUERADE BALL.

The Southside Armory last night was the scene of a very discreditable affair called a mas-

querade ball, engaged in by certain so-called society men and women of the city. Some of the women are daughters of hitherto respected citizens. Let all young men seeking wives avoid these girls of the round dance; for what man possessed of the sagacity of a mushroom wants to marry a woman that's been handled a couple of seasons or so? There are two secondhand articles no gentleman wants—a chew of tobacco and a girl. The revels continued until two o'clock in the morning with all the marks of heathenism. Society must be saved!

PROFANE DRUMMERS.

It has been reported that drummers stopping at the Sawdust Hotel have rendered this noted old hostelry unfit for gentle folk, and that they have become so openly unclean and profane in their language that the city should appoint officers to guard them while within its walls, lest all the avenues of trade be corrupted. They are fast ceasing to speak English, and seem to confine their conversation to a swearing lingo. They are most peculiar; they go about smoking cigars and gasping every few seconds, "I'll be damned!"—and, no doubt they will be. Any gentleman who had to live in the same quarters with them would commit suicide. It makes us weep to think of the corrupting influences these obscene, profane, gambling, drinking, boisterous human animals will exert on the demons. No wonder they have

to be chained to keep them in the place where drummers go. The city must be cleansed!

MODERN BARBARISM.

Quite a large number of women continue to appear on the streets with insufficient clothing, resembling in quantity Oriental costumes, indicating that the wearers had forgotten to complete their toilet. The attention of the city authorities has been called to this species of immodesty, and hereafter females who go about the thoroughfares attired in low-necked dresses will be in danger of arrest. The women must be clothed!

Attention is also directed to the depraved taste evinced by persons, who otherwise would be respectable, in the selection of pictures, statuary, and books. Nine-tenths of the homes in the city of Goalong are disfigured by nude statues and immodest pictures. Half the calendars in the town are indecent, and more than half the books and magazines are saturated with sensationalism, profanity, and impurity. Some of the things pictured and printed on the walls and the bookshelves of Goalong would corrupt a savage and nauseate a buzzard. A roster of the houses amenable to the above-mentioned charge will be kept by the police to indicate the places to look for criminals. The homes of the people must be fumigated!

THE THEATER.

A vaudeville performance will take place tonight at the Academy of Music. Only the de-

praved attend these exhibitions of shame. The man or woman who has beheld the immoral pictures on the sign boards, and then goes to see the play, confesses thereby to a fall. The stage panders to the lowest tastes of mankind, and there is not a moral theater in the world. The dress, tone, and life of actors and actresses all savor of the worst features of heathenism. The amusements of the city must be scoured!

OBITUARY.

Another fraud is dead. Old Hunks Russell will be buried at three o'clock this afternoon. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord! How beneficent are the offices of Death to rid the community of so consummate an octopus. Russell started as a teacher in the public schools of the city, got whipped by a boy he insulted, became an officer in his church, robbed the ecclesiastical treasury, started a brewery, gambled, got rich, died, and is visiting his master, the Devil, for an indefinite period. The more I know of such people, the better I like dogs. Oh! Tomlins, why dost thou linger? The public interests must be guarded!

THE CITY CHAIN-GANG.

On our streets daily may be seen a small band of industrious men, who, having forsaken all that the earth holds dear, have been induced, under stress of untoward circumstances, to unite in a

society for mutual improvement, known in judiciary circles as "the chain-gang." It is not altogether a pleasing institution, yet it has, perhaps, its advantages. It is, in the first place, one of the few organizations that have as their sole object the moral culture of its members. It seeks neither pleasure nor money. It works for others entirely and attends strictly to its own business.

Its members are active and useful in a high degree, as the construction of city pavements, ditches, and public buildings will demonstrate. They have done more for the town than all the dudes, political tricksters, gossips, and revelers put together. For this they have received scant praise. But even at this tardy hour, let justice be done, though the heavens fall. They are the best-behaved people to be met on the street. They have been, it is true, found guilty of some offences, for which they are justly held to account, but their vices are less conspicuous and heinous than those of seventy-five per cent of the populace.

They do less harm than skeptical preachers like Tomlins, rogues like Russell, politicians like our mayor, Mr. Grafter, and Sabbath breakers like many of our citizens in high life. A prize-fighter cripples his opponent, and gets \$5,000; a man in the slums slaps his neighbor in the face, and gets 30 days. A speculator commits robbery by gambling in futures, and takes a wife; another man commits robbery by abstracting a chicken, and takes a ball-and-chain. A successful swindler steals half a million, and goes to the Legislature;

a pauper steals a watermelon, and goes to jail. No doubt this is due to the fact that Justice is blindfolded. Lets help her out of her difficulty and the real rogues into jail.

The chain-gang thus far has been too exclusive; it should be enlarged so as to be of greater benefit to society, and include all frauds, dealers in liquor, corrupters of youth, swearers, writers of vicious literature, and all people that have been untrue to their marriage vows. Hitherto the wrong people have joined the gang; but henceforth let the city fathers see to it that its ranks are recruited from brown-stone fronts and gilded offices, so that the best interests of the town be conserved. Reform must triumph!

Thus closed my editorial work, which required somewhat more than the allotted space. The carriers had hardly delivered the morning paper, when I began to realize what the prophet meant by the "burden of the word of the Lord." It dawned upon me what it costs to be a reformer. My fellow citizens were angry with me because I had laid down some general principles of ethical conduct which a tame hyena would admit; my philanthropy, however, awakened only ingratitude and abuse. It was again the question of the ancient seer, "Who hath believed our report?"

Things began to happen around the residence of the Reverend Heredity Beans, D.D., after the "Daily Home News" had been well read throughout town. So much happened, indeed, that until the Reverend Heredity got into harness again and began to do

things himself I can only give a brief account, so I copy from my diary as follows:

9:30 o'clock.—At late breakfast, eating scrambled eggs and corn bread—an interruption is unsavory at such a time—the door-bell jingles. Wax answers it. He delays his return. Back later—flushed face and a smile. “What’s the matter, Wax?” inquires his frightened mother. “Oh! ’taint nothin’, ma. Just the Mayor’s cub brought a message to pa, that he’d better not come down the street until he ’pologized for that insult he—I mean pa—put in the “Home News” about him—I mean the mayor.” “But that didn’t make your face so red, did it?” “Nom’e; but you see, that kid said his daddy was goin’ to bust my daddy; and I busted him—I mean the kid. That was all, ma.” “My son,” say I, “have you forgotten that your father is trying to reform this town?”

10 o'clock.—The postman delivers a peck of letters. All of Tomlins’ friends and Russell’s family demand apologies. All the male kin of the women who attended the masquerade ball and the theater address me in vehement speech. Eight of the letters contain challenges. I accept them all—weapons, squirt-guns; distance, quarter of a mile; backs facing, Bucephalus second; time, midnight.

11 o'clock.—Quick jerks at the bell. The parlor is full of irate women. Two married ladies tell me that I have caused trouble in their homes. Their husbands have taken down some of the most costly pictures in the house and thrown them into the ash barrel. Hardly a calendar, even, can be found on the walls, while three beautiful Cupids have been carted to the dump-

ing ground. "Your husbands are wise and deserve better spouses," I reply, showing them out. Next! A dozen young women speak at once. Shut 'em off, gag eleven and tell the twelfth to go ahead. She says: "We have spent hundreds of dollars on our spring costumes, and now they are perfectly useless on account of your awful criticisms. We are real indignant. You know the low-necked dress is quite the fashion, and just lovely; and now we have to give them to the servants!" "That's hard on the servants—poor things!" I reply. "Better send them to the African Kaffirs. Next!" Two frying-size girls, sobbing, say their lovers have broken their engagements because they attended the masquerade ball the other night, "just because you put something in the paper about it. Oh! it's a shame!" "Yes, that's what I think about it. Don't do so any more. Tell your sweethearts to give you another trial, and promise them you'll do better. Be good children; good-by!"

AND WHAT IS MAN?

Chapter XXXI.

I RESOLVED to take the prophet's chances, and faced the mob. As I opened the door and stepped on the porch, a hundred weapons were leveled at my breast, some female fists were shaken at me, and a couple (possibly three) of brick-bats whizzed above my head. I raised my hand to secure a hearing, for I felt I could talk them into reason.

"Fellow-citizens," said I, "you look hungry. ["Yes, and we've come here to eat you up. We like goose."] Well, I feel sure I would not agree with you; but, if you will throw yourselves in line with the reform movement which is sweeping over the town, I promise you a good square meal. [Cheers.]

"Do I hear some one in the crowd whisper that the parson would have a lively time feeding fifteen hundred people? Fellow patriots, I have on hand a better scheme than that. It is this: Reform means bread for the hungry, clothes for the naked, and shelter for the houseless. It also means civilization and Christianity. Most of us are born savages, and stay so till we die. ["Say, do you mean us?"] No, I mean those uncivilized people on the other side of town. The inhabitants of this city are made up mostly of barbarians, fools, women, and dogs. ["Is yer 'ludin' to my

ole 'oman, Cap'n?"] No, I'm talking about that woman on the other side of the street. ["Then you're p'intin' at *my* ole gal."] Oh, no; I'm speaking of that family that lives on another street. ["But how about that good square meal?"]

"Well, gentlemen, I believe that those who have made you hungry, ought to feed you. ["That's right!"] The saloons have furnished you drink, but have given you no bread. They have stirred your passions, and taken advantage of the storm raised by my effort to save society, to send you here to abuse me and check the movement. Russell's brewery is at the bottom of it. ["That's so! That's so!"] This is all the evidence I want. Now, my friends, in anticipation of something like this, I have made arrangement to have served, at short notice, a good, square dinner at the Sawdust Hotel at the expense of the Russell estate. The executor knows that he will do well to get off so lightly, for he has committed, in organizing this riot, one of the gravest offences known to the law. ["Fried oysters for me!" "Chicken and gravy for me!" "Turkey hash and 'taters fur me!" "Gimme er good, squar dinner and some trimmin's in de shape of ice cream and cake!"] Yes, you shall have that and more too. Bring your wives and children and kin and friends. Dinner will be ready at two o'clock.

"This afternoon, after you have eaten, I shall have work for you to do. Put on your best clothes and whet your appetite. ["Now, parson, this thing won't be complete 'cep'n' Mrs. Beans comes down and sits at the head of the table to give it 'spectability."] All right! She'll be on hand to see that you get plenty of

coffee." ["Three cheers for Mrs. Beans! Three cheers for the parson! Three cheers for reform!"]

The news of the feast spread like wildfire to every factory and shop in the city. A free dinner and a band of music have peculiar attractions for the major portion of mankind; it was, therefore, not difficult to impress bosses with the opportuneness of a half-holiday.

According to notice, at 1:45 o'clock, the laboring people, together with a multitude that were not laborers, came streaming through the streets and alleys, as thoroughly pagan as any mob that ever defiled through the gates of ancient Babylon: with the same hopes, pleasures, ideals, and pretty much the same gods; moved by the same impulses, governed by the same prejudices; in the same way tools in the hands of any leader—threatening a reformer in the forenoon, following him in the afternoon. What is man?

The crowd was to form in line of march at Blizzard Square. The band led, followed by the children; then came the women, many of whom carried babes in their arms; last came the males. Some of the stronger sons of toil elevated me on their shoulders while the women, determined not to be outdone by the sterner sex, raised Polytechnic to the same honor. As I unfurled a small United States flag which I bore in my hand, the band struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner," and my motley army raised a yell that made the welkin ring. We reached the hotel in perfect order, and not a man, not a woman, nor a child was missing, for the god Pan has always a good congregation.

Of course, it required time and tact to handle this immense concourse of humanity, but there was never

a better-behaved set of heathen this side the moon. Polytechnic superintended the coffee, while some of the most cultured young men and women from the best churches in the city assumed the role of waiting on the rabble and toilers, to the infinite delight of all.

Jovial expressions passed from lip to lip, and mirth was plentiful: "If this is reform, put me an' my wife down for a few of it!" "Yes, I'll take a couple!" "An' if this be civilization, I want my ole 'oman's cupboard full of it!" "An' faith, this is the fust time I iver filt that I wus er gintlemun!" exclaimed a round-faced Irish matron.

The dinner, at length, was finished and the crowd was happy. It was the hour for reformation—you can't reform a hungry man—so standing in the center of one of the tables, surrounded by the wreck that follows in the wake of hungry crusaders, I opened fire with oratory again.

"Ladies and gentlemen," I shouted; "I wish to speak a word about the reform movement that is sweeping through the city. I rely on your coöperation for success. ["And you shall have it, parson."] I want to start with the babies. ["An' faith, do ye ba afther reformin' the babbies, mon?"] Yes; I want to reform the little ones. All babies are born heathen, and unless removed from their environment, most of them will stay so. ["An' it's er fact, as shure as I spake the English language. They needs er fray dinner ivery now an' thin."]

"If your children remain where they are, they will grow up to be just like their parents, and the town cannot be civilized. Many of you are overstocked

with offspring, while there are in the town numerous couples that are childless, and an army of old bachelors, all of whom ought to share the burden of rearing children. The responsibilities of life ought in some measure to be equalized. Now, I'm going to borrow all the babies that are insufficiently clothed, fed, or housed.

"Ha! ha! ha!" went all over the hall like a galvanic shock. "It's er good idee!" exclaimed a hundred tired and haggard mothers. "I kin lind ye saix," chimed in the Irish lady.

In a few moments there were nine hundred and forty-five babies pledged, to be disposed of as suggested above. It was understood that they might recover the infants when able to care properly for them.

"Now, fellow patriots," said I, in closing, "I call attention to the approaching election, which is to determine whether rum shall rule our city any longer. There is but one way for any man who has passed beyond the barbaric state to vote. What say you, gentlemen?" Many were non-committal, but a goodly number pledged me their support.

My variegated host next paraded the streets for about two hours to the sound of martial music. The women deposited their babies where they thought they would be best provided for, rang the bell, and stepped back into the procession. At the mayor's office, the Irish sister, among others, donated a pair of twins, to the hilarious amusement of many spectators. The babes were generally taken up by servants or the housewife, but occasionally by the master of the house himself. In such cases eyes wildly flashed fire, lips



"AT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, THE IRISH SISTER, AMONG OTHERS, DONATED A PAIR OF TWINS,
TO THE HILARIOUS AMUSEMENT OF MANY SPECTATORS."

spake unsavory words, and tongues pronounced anathemas on the humble reformer.

The next mail flooded me with compliments which I prefer not to repeat. Offended husbands and old bachelors sent me twenty-seven more challenges and I accepted all of them on the same conditions as previously stated. Next I nerved myself for a duel with King Rum.

The temperance wave some little time before had reached the city of Goalong, which fact tossed and mixed and conglomerated things in no small degree. Parties had been formed in favor of the saloon, and parties had been as promptly formed with the determination of destroying the saloon. The contest registered so high on the political thermometer that every citizen was forced by public sentiment to take sides for or against the monster, that had been, with passing years, more and more defiantly menacing the liberty and civilization of the republic.

As for myself, being by nature a reformer, I entered now into the struggle with tireless zeal. I spoke in private on the subject, and I preached and lectured in public; besides, I wrote about a peck of articles on the question in its various phases every week for the daily papers. The grog men, not appreciating my efforts to redeem the city from the jaws of ruin, threatened to burn my parsonage and take my life. On one occasion, as I was returning home after nightfall, some individuals of the baser sort stoned me; while on another, as I was leaving church after evening service, a couple of hired bravoës shot at me—and ran; so that's the reason I didn't run myself.

My stand on the temperance question made me a leader in the fierce struggle in which the town was engaged. The rum-sellers feared and hated me; they burned me in effigy; they swore that, if the impending election went against them, they would write my obituary in my own blood; and in addition to these compliments, they serenaded me with bacchanalian songs. So intense was the feeling of the dram-sellers toward me on account of the cause I espoused, that, while I was passing down Grog Avenue the night before the election, on my way to address a meeting on the subject of voting liquor out of the city, some roughs threw a dynamite bomb between my legs. The shell, from some cause, failed to explode; but I didn't. I jumped five feet, eight inches into the air and uttered a war whoop. The liquor men ran together to see what had become of my bones, and then disappeared.

"I'm blown to pieces!" I screamed rushing down the avenue, lined with bar-rooms, "my bones are scattered all over the city!" And as I fled, I kicked a dozen saloon windows to atoms, unable to control the action of my limbs.

Arriving at the Opera House, the immense crowd there greeted me with deafening applause as I ascended the rostrum to make the closing speech of the campaign. Never had public speaker a more refined and cultured audience on the one hand, or a more besotted and diabolical set of roughs on the other. Brave men gave me their hand; anxious mothers prayed for me; beautiful maidens smiled on me; the votaries of the rum-shops hissed me; while the Irish lady spoke out in meeting, and said: "If I niver smoile agin, me

old mon shill vote against the rummies, fur this is the gentlemun that borrowed the babbies!"

"Ladies and gentlemen," I began. "I realize to-night as never before, that, in a large measure, the destiny of the race depends upon the success of the temperance movement. If the rum traffic is not suppressed—and it can be suppressed only by the omnipotence of the ballot box—the nation will deteriorate into a herd of red-noses, and the Millennium will be retarded twenty-five centuries.

"Look for a moment at the sad condition of the United States. The bloody hand of Rum has clutched the throat of this republic. The mighty giant of strong drink has placed his tyrannic heel on the lofty head of the American eagle, so that the national bird flaps its wings hopelessly in the dust of humiliation. The influence of liquor is felt from Washington to San Francisco, and from the Golden Gate to the Philippine Islands. Strong drink is king in Congress as well as in our jury boxes. It rules the brown-stone front as truly as the hovel of the back street. Bacchus is one of the chief of the American deities, honored by nine-tenths of the politicians.

"Fellow-citizens, do you believe your ears when I declare to you, from the remorseless table of statistics, that there are in this country 500,000 rum-sellers going about, like their venerable progenitor, seeking whom they may devour? What think you of the 800,000 drunken paupers and children, costing the tax-payers \$100,000,000? What think you of the 300,000 intemperate criminals, who live, not by their means, but by their meanness? What think you of the

100,000 American youths who are demonized every year by strong drink? What say you, fellow-citizens, when our people spend more money on liquor than on clothing, bread, education, and religion, all put together? With what emotion do you learn that 60,000 drunkards die every year?

“Ah! ladies and gentlemen, don’t your hearts heave a sigh of compassion for the lost angels that are forced to live amid such corrupting influences? How terrible a place the Bottomless Pit must be, when to its census are added 60,000 drunkards every year! Who can blame Satan for trying to break the chains that confine him to such a crowd?

“They tell us of moral suasion. Gentlemen, you had just as well preach the Ten Commandments to a hungry mosquito, as to appeal to the moral sense of a sot or a bar-keeper. I have tried the experiment, but with small success. On one occasion, seeing Pat O’Kelley in the gutter conversing with a toad, I resolved to reform him. I hired a dray to bring Pat to the parsonage, and had him put into a nice clean bed, intending to doctor him with moral suasion.

“So, next morning, after having given Pat a suit of clothes and a hat, I had his shoes blacked, and put him at the foot of the table, to make him feel the weight of responsibility. I thought Pat belonged to a large class of people that the world had neglected too long, and that such persons must be reformed and made respectable. I gave Pat a Bible, and took him to prayer meeting. He told the congregation that I was the making of him, and he had a mind to preach. Next morning forty-seven sots came to the parson-

age to get breakfast, a suit of clothes, and have their shoes blacked, all having a mind to preach. It seemed that the town would go distracted, and that the whole earth was turning to righteousness. But I fixed up the sots, and told them to meet me at the temperance lodge Tuesday night. But before Tuesday night came, these reformed drunkards each wanted to borrow ten dollars from me; but as I didn't have funds enough to go round at that rate, I let them have two dollars and a half each. Well, that was the last of these gentlemen; and Pat—why, he got so respectable and so thoroughly reformed that he eloped Saturday night with my silver watch and Sunday breeches.

“My friends, our legislation on the strong drink question is a miserable botch, and I assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that a one-legged goose in a frosted pea-field could hatch up a better set of laws in ten seconds. But the geese that flock to our Legislatures have not so much good gumption. Not observing the slim influence of moral suasion on themselves, they quack to us that we must use it.

“Gentlemen, why not employ the same suasion in handling all other evils? The law appoints a police force in the towns to maintain order, and then sets up a dram-shop to kick up a fuss. The law demands order, and then licenses the saloon to create disorder. The law builds an orphan asylum, and then makes orphans to put in it, by licensing an institution to kill their fathers. The law permits the grog-seller to upset the reason, and then builds an insane asylum. The law condemns divorce, and then suffers the saloon to unfit the husband for married life. The law smiles on

a business that trains a man for murder, and then hangs the murderer. Isn't that wisdom on a high key? If a man give his neighbor a fatal dose of strychnine, he must take a swing, but if he give his neighbor a fatal drink, destroying both body and soul, the strong arm of this great government fondles and protects him, and says in blandished strains, 'Go it, boots; do it again!' Gentlemen, such a law is a fit emetic for the Apostate Angel!

"The great Paul said, 'Beware of dogs!' I say in behalf of decency and humanity, 'Beware of such dog-kennels!' Better turn loose a pack of bloodhounds in the community; better infest the streets with deadly serpents; better let a thousand rotting lepers run rampant on the highways, than to permit these institutions of barbarism to continue their mission.

"You sots and grog-sellers of the city of Goalong, what have you and your kind done for America? You have broken the hearts of tens and hundreds of thousands of mothers in this fair land, who to-night are sobbing over their drunken sons. You have turned the husbands of unnumbered wives into pestilential carcasses. You have clothed myriads of children in rags, and converted happy homes into boneyards. Walk through the orphan asylums, peopled with your victims; enter the jails, and see the criminals you have made; go to the pest-houses, and see the work of your hands; visit the gallows, where you ought to spend a quarter of an hour, and look at the ghosts of your murdered patrons; frequent the burning Tartarus, and behold the fires you have kindled, and hear the sighings of the damned!

"Fellow-citizens of this noble old city! Buckle on the temperance armor! Rouse you for the fight! The battle is between right and wrong; between liberty and slavery; between home and the dram-shop; between God and the Devil. On the coming morrow, rush to the polls, and vote the accursed villainy out of town forever. And the God of battles grant that this may be a red-letter day in our calendar, and in the history of our achievements a great Waterloo."

Honestly I didn't mean a joke when I said Waterloo, but some of my hearers thought I purposely meant to indicate the kind of fluid Goalong would drink after election. The impression this speech made on my audience must be imagined; it cannot be described. The grog men hooted and hissed; they stamped their feet and cursed; but the friends of temperance shouted, and laughed, and hurrahed. The ladies blessed me as strong men bore me through the streets on their shoulders.

Next day, after much maneuvering and earnest voting, it was discovered, about five o'clock in the afternoon, that the temperance cause had won a signal victory. Of course, in the midst of such excitement, I lost my equipoise, and set out down the street, with Polytechnic's everyday sun-bonnet on, whooping and shouting and cracking my heels together like a ten-year-old boy.

The reform movement was triumphant; yet in the midst of my joy, a dark shadow settled over my home. Wax, with broken heart and streaming eyes, came rushing into my study, announcing in sobbing accents that Bucephalus was dead. It was as if death had vis-

ited my own family. Bucephalus was nearly of my own age, having passed with me through the changes of an eventful life. He had grown old under my saddle, had become a pet with Polytechnic and the children, and seemed to regard himself as a member of the household, entitled to all of its joys and its privileges. So I decided to take him back to our old home at Shakerag, and, having conveyed him thither, followed by the entire family in tears, gave him an honorable sepulture in the little cemetery there. And I placed a neat plank at the head of the grave, and inscribed on it these true words:

IN MEMORY OF BUCEPHALUS.

Thou leavest an honored name; thy part thou hast
well performed; thou goest to thy grave in
peace; and thy memory shall endure
when more ambitious names are
dead. Faithful mule,
farewell!

SHOUTING CHURCH'S FATE

Chapter XXXII.

As I was departing from Shakerag, having buried my mule, I descried in the distance an old man sitting under a wide-spreading oak, with his forehead resting on his left hand, absorbed in meditation. Upon approaching, I recognized Brother Safety Valve, of former years; and being wearied, I alighted to exchange courtesies with my father's friend and mine. He reminded me of Elijah lodging under the juniper tree, the very picture of a prophet of a past generation, over whose whited locks a hundred storms had swept, and in whose soul a hundred dreams had burst. He looked up as I dismounted and a little pleasure gleamed upon his face.

"Red," said he, "I'se mighty proud to see you onct mo' in this life. How is the good Lord dealin' with you, son?"

"I'm sure it's a privilege to meet you again, Uncle Safety. How are you getting along, and what's the news about Shouting Church?"

"Ah me!" sighed the aged man, shaking his snowy locks for very grief. "Shouting Church is like unto the seven churches of Asia, which was blotted off'n the face of the airth fur thar wickedness. Ah! Red,

how the Millennium was jes round the corner; but, chile, the Spirit of the Lord wasn't thar, an' righteousness has kerwalloped herself, an' tooted her far'well horn 'bout ole Shouting Church."

"Don't you approve of revivals, Uncle Safety?"

"Thar now! chile. Revivals, whar thar is the good Spirit an' common sense an' decency, is altogether another matter. But arthquakes an' volcanoes an' fools an' hypocrisy is what ole Safety's er talkin' 'bout.

"What else, Uncle Safety?" inquired I, anxious to hear the conclusion of the whole matter.

"Well, er heap of things; I hardly know whar to begin. Fust an' fo'must, howsomever, er sort of rivalry got hatched up betwixt St. Bootjack's Chapel an' Shouting Church. An' it started on this wise: The St. Bootjacks got to coaxin' mighty nigh all the childun in the neighborhood to thar church of er meetin' days, givin' 'em sugar rags an' gimcracks an' one thing an' tother, ontel Shouting Church Sunday School come in er ace of runnin' dry an' bustin' up. So the Shouting Churchers—an' here's whar the Devil come in—up an' detarmined to have er Christmas tree fur to fetch the childun back. I has noticed that the Devil is mighty fond of trees, my boy. You know how it was in the garden, when the ole sarpent p'inted out the tree of knowledge to Eve. Sometimes he 'sumes the form of pride, an' loiters under what folks calls fam'ly-trees; an' the nex' shrub he clum was the Christmas tree."

"So you had the Christmas tree?"

"What? Me have er Christmas tree? Ole Safety Valve, who is jes turned his eighty-fust year, an' has

been er fightin' fur Zion these three-quarters of er century all but? Not me, chile."

"Who managed it, then, Uncle Safety?"

"Bless you, chile! I think Ole Nick was in the top of it, an' all the dancers and ungodly professors in the county at the bottom of it. Members what never 'tended meetin' from one revival to another was the chief cooks. It was'er monstrous frolic."

"Did it draw the children back?"

"Draw? Sakes alive! It drewed every chile in ten mile of Shouting Church. The superintendent 'lowed how every child who was present on the Sunday befo' Christmas would be entitled to a gift on the tree. Accordin'ly, at the meetin' befo' the tree doin's was to come off, thar was seven hundred childun at Sunday school, buzzin' like er set of humblebees. Draw? Yes, chile; it drawed like er mustard plarster."

"Were the children pleased with the tree?"

"Might'ly fur er couple of days; an' they made the neighborhood lively, tootin' thar tin horns, bangin' thar drums, and bustin' thar pop-crackers. But after that, they 'lowed how nuther the superintendent nur nobody else could fool them with ten-cent toys. So on the nex' Sunday atter the Christmas tree thar wasn't enough to make er decent pie."

Here the venerable old man, in whose composition there was a rich vein of genuine humor, pausing in the narrative he had become so much interested in, lit his pipe, and leaned his snowy locks against the tree to rest awhile. After a few moments of apparently deep reflection, he resumed the thread of the story.

"That ain't all, nuther," said he.

"What else, Uncle Safety?" said I, profoundly interested myself.

"Well, some of 'em what does er pile of things 'sides sayin' thar pra'rs, tuck er notion that the church needed er hundud spittoons fur the terbacker-chawers an' snuft-dippers to dreem tharselves into durin' divine sarvice, as if the chief part of it was to spit ruther than pray. So the conference 'p'inted er committee of five sisters to hatch up er way to git the necessary money; an' what er committee of five women can't hatch up, in my judgment can't be hatched. They's wus'n er incubator. In kose they had er plan on foot by nex' conference, to buy all the spittoons in the United States all but; an' Canady, too."

"What was it, Uncle Safety?"

"Well, chile, they rigged up er carumpus they called er church festival. They charged er dime to go in, er dime to stay in, an' er dime to come out. They sole ice cream an' lemonade an' gingercakes fur ten times what they was wuth; an' if you gin 'em a five-dollar bill to change, the sassy gals would scoot off on tiptoe, turn up thar nose at you, an' laugh fit to kill tharselves, but never gin you er cent of change back. If you axed 'em fur it, they would up an' put thar thumb to thar nose, an' wiggle thar little finger at you, sayin' they was makin' money fur the Lord."

"I suppose they bought the spittoons?"

"Yes, bless you! An' then they detarmined to raise mo' money, to put up a horse-rack in the churchyard, when thar was no mo' need of a horse-rack than thar was of a locermotive. But they thought the church wouldn't let 'em dance, so they sot up fur another

frolic in the shape of er festival or fa'r, or some sich mess. An' they picked out all the plumpest an' buxomest gals in the bunch, an' sot 'em in charge of the wheel of fortune, an' the art gallery, an' the post orfis, an' sich like. The gal what turned the wheel of fortune, showed the fellows who they was gwine to marry, whilst the gal at the post orfis handed 'em out er letter from thar sweethearts. In kose, every ole bachelor an' widower an' all the young bucks in the community stood 'roun', payin' twenty-five cents to have thar fortunes told an' make the gals giggle. Mind you, I ain't objectin' to the young folks havin' er little fun, but I think it's onreasonable fur 'em to have it at the expense of the Lord."

"They put up the horse-rack, I suppose?" said I.

"Put it up? Bless you! They put up half er dozen of 'em; an' when they got tired puttin' up horse-racks, they said the church steeple ought to be made er leetle higher. So in kose er passel of gals was 'p'inted to rig up another scheme fur mo' money. An' what you think it was this time?"

"I have no idea, Uncle Safety; it's hard to tell what a committee of girls will do."

"That's er p'int-blank fac', chile; an' I speck I better let the matter drap right on the spot."

"Don't stop, Uncle Safety."

"Well, chile," said the old man, straightening up, "it was on this wise: Thar was er man to be hung down at Toadville, an' you know Toadville ain't nowhar from Shouting Church; an' in kose a monstrous crowd was expected at the hangin'. So the gals diskivered thar was er mighty chance to rake er sight of money

fur the church; an' on hangin' day they rented all the groun's fur some considerable distance roun' the jail, an' charged twenty-five cents admission. Thar was er lot of scrawny cedar trees in the space erbout the jail, which they called 'resarved seats,' an' whosomever clum up 'em had to pay fifty cents extry. So, if you b'lieve ole Safety, every cedar tree was filled tell the limbs was erbout to break off, an' the groun' erroun' 'em was packed fur two hundred yards er mo'.

"Ah!" moaned the old veteran, "they built the steeple higher, but it was another repertition over ag'in of the Tower of Babel. It was fur the pride of man, not the glory of God; so br'iles, an' variances an' confusions, an' misonderstandin's an' sich like sprung up among the members, ontel thar was no peace nur union amon'st 'em. An' the church went down, down, down—fust one withdrawin', then another, tell the church completely busted up, an' is now advertised in the county paper fur sale. It makes my ole heart blee'—"

Here old Safety gave vent to his tears, and, applying his well-used handkerchief to his eyes, wept and sobbed over the ruins of his Zion.

I resumed my journey, my own eyes moistened, and after a ride of several miles came in sight of Shouting Church, over whose closed doors was nailed a broad plank, on which was written in large black characters:

FOR SALE!

MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Chapter XXXIII.

It was a winter night, and I sat by the fire in my study. As the embers glowed in the open fireplace, I mused, something like this:

The great have made their record, and been gathered to their fathers; the wise have shone like stars, whose light now is quenched in darkness. Adam is dead; Moses is dead; Washington is dead; Tennyson is dead; Bismarck is dead; Queen Victoria is dead; the wise, the great, the noble, the geniuses, are dead or dying—and I don't feel very well myself. H'm, I thought, I must prepare materials for my biography. It's a debt I owe to my fellow-countrymen and to posterity. So I turned to my beloved wife.

"My dear, get your pen, ink, and pad," I said. "I want you to jot down a few items which I neglected to give to my biographer, the Rev. Dr. Squeedunk, who is to publish my 'Life' when I am no more."

MYSELF (*dictating*): *Nothing would have been more out of accord with the feelings of the Reverend Heredity Beans, D.D., [be sure you write D.D. distinctly; it means a heap, you know] than to have the story of his life rehearsed before the public. So modest, so gentle, so shrinking, he has made it difficult for his biographer to secure first-hand materials; and but for the fact that they are so abundant elsewhere we*



“ I WANT YOU TO JOT DOWN A FEW ITEMS WHICH I NEGLECTED TO GIVE TO MY BIOGRAPHER. ”

should despair of ever knowing the man in his true greatness. He always avoided publicity, and never took part in the questions of the day, unless compelled to do so by force of circumstances. [What are you laughing at, Polly?] The boy Heredity was precocious to an unusual degree. His teachers were under the necessity of restraining him from overtaxing his brain, so diligently did he study.

POLYTECHNIC: I thought you told Wax the other day that he must not be discouraged with his lessons, that when you were a boy you could never see any sense in them either. And I understand trigonometry now better than you do, sir.

MYSELF: But you see we ain't writing your biography, little Miss Smarty. Now, quit laughing and go on writing: *On one occasion, an overbearing schoolmate began without cause to abuse young Beans, and jerking his hat from his head tossed it into the mud, threatening him with blows. He bore this insult patiently, for it was against his high sense of honor to fight. Had he followed the bent of his own fiery nature, he would have resented this insult and fought to the bitter end; but he obeyed principle rather than passion. Beans retired to his room weeping great tears. The more he thought over the insult, the more angry he became. He could scarcely restrain himself; his nerves twitched. He clinched his fists and started for the door, intending to thrash the wicked boy; but again he bowed to the sacredness of right, and sat down. It was painful, but it was heroic. A second time the great pent-up fire began to consume him. In righteous rage he started for the*

door, intending to make jelly of his foe.. He opened the door, saw the boy, went back, locked the door, sat down, and reproached himself. It was a great struggle, but it was also a sublime triumph. The boy knocked angrily at the door. Young Beans' first impulse was to go out, and with one fell blow slay his persecutor. It was a quick, hard struggle between vengeance and forgiveness. Finally forgiveness triumphed—and the heroic youth jumped out of the window.

POLYTECHNIC: Why, Red, everybody will think you ran from the boy.

MYSELF: Do you think so? Then, put it this way: *The boy knocked at the door. Patience and forgiveness could endure the strain no longer. Young Beans jerked the lock off the door in his haste to resent the insult he had received, rushed at the boy like an uncaged tiger, and, with clinched fist, knocked the boy, twice his size, ten feet into the air. The youth fell with a great thud to the ground, whereupon our hero put his antagonist's head between his legs and wore out a blue-back speller on his quivering person. When at last the boy was free, moved with terror, he ran and jumped through Red Beans' window and hid in a chicken-coop.*

POLYTECHNIC: Why, Red Beans! Ain't you ashamed?

MYSELF: What, Polly, dear? Don't you see that sounds better? Now, do please stop that laughing, and write fast; I may die any time. *At the first call of his country, Heredity volunteered his services, and joined that immortal cavalry company, known in his-*

tory as The Tiger Dragoons. Thrice he was elected captain, and thrice refused. He cared nothing for titles and the tinsel of war, but was ambitious only to cross swords with the enemy. His military genius displayed itself in all of the hundred battles in which he fought, but it was at the battle of Chancellorsville that he won his most enduring fame and brightest laurels. The enemy was pressing hard on our lines; and the Dragoons, shot down by a terrible fusillade of artillery, were retreating with depleted numbers, when young Beans, sitting his historic mule like an Apollo, rallied his dispirited comrades, and charged the death-generating battery on a distant hill, captured forty cannon, turned them on the foe, and won the battle.

POLYTECHNIC: What a whopper!

MYSELF: I know; but this is not intended to be a history of the war—only a biography. Successful in all departments of life, it was in the pulpit that Beans attained the most signal results. He was eloquent in no small degree. It was impossible for the dullest hearer to sleep under his ministry. He possessed all the qualifications of the orator—his presence was commanding, his voice resonant, his gestures graceful, his rhetoric a model, his soul a pillar of fire, his thought a cataract of logic and emotion. He could never find a church that would accommodate the anxious multitudes that fain would have hung upon his lips—and hundreds of disappointed worshipers every Sabbath were turned away from the church doors.

WAX, BUTTER, and LIMA: Pa, when was that?

MYSELF: Oh, bother, children! Don't you know that I am not writing up the church minutes, but just

plain biography? Here's a nice new almanac; look at the pictures. Let's go on, Polly: *Beans* was by nature a poet. Had he cultivated the muse, he would have made a name that would have outlived time itself. He was a student of nature, in which he found the subjects of his art; and his most splendid poems are based on common things. Hear him as he sings in his "Ode to a Buzzard:"

*Buzzard great and Buzzard true,
How I wish that I were you!
Noble bird of the black wing,
Take the tribute that I bring.*

We see here the afflatus of the poet, the inspiration of a true son of nature, and the genius of a master of verse. No one can read these lines without weeping.

We now turn to Dr. Beans as a husband.

POLYTECHNIC: Oh me!

MYSELF: *Nothing could have been more beautiful than his family life. His consideration for his wife marked him as a model husband. He sought to gratify every desire of his darling Polytechnic, especially evincing his ever deepening affection in the little things of life, wherein is shown the man's highest worth. He sacrificed everything for his wife's comfort, and placed his time and money at her disposal.*

POLYTECHNIC: Red Beans, what system of ethics do you follow? Don't you know, you lazy thing, that often I have to pull you out of the bed and wash your face to get your eyes open?

MYSELF: But that wouldn't do to go into a biography, my little cherub. Are you ready to go on? Now then: *As a letter-writer, he has had few equals.*

A letter written during a visit to New York, breathing the tenderest affection, is here submitted as a specimen of his epistolary skill:

My angel Polly: I have spent weary days and sleepless nights longing to catch one glimpse of you again; and though it has been but two days since your charms ravished my vision, it seems a dozen millenniums. Thus you discover, that notwithstanding we have been joyously married a number of years, my love gains momentum with each fleeting second, so that, like a torrent, it is ever swelling as it sweeps onward to the sea. I shall write you again in half an hour.

Now write my parting words. [Why, you ain't dead yet.] I know; but a biography must have an end, and I think I foresee how it will be. Be quiet, children. Polly, you are laughing too. Now write: *At last the end came, serene and beautiful. Death was to such a soul a benediction. The birds seemed to have a sweeter chirp, the clouds a softer glow, the flowers an intenser odor. The devoted wife and beloved children stood by the bedside, where angels seemed to be hovering on celestial wings. The heart stopped, the spirit fled; but the last words of Heredity Beans were:*

“THE WORLD IS ROUND AND FUNNY!”

(But all this was before I sat down to write this real, true chronicle of my life.)

THE END.

